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EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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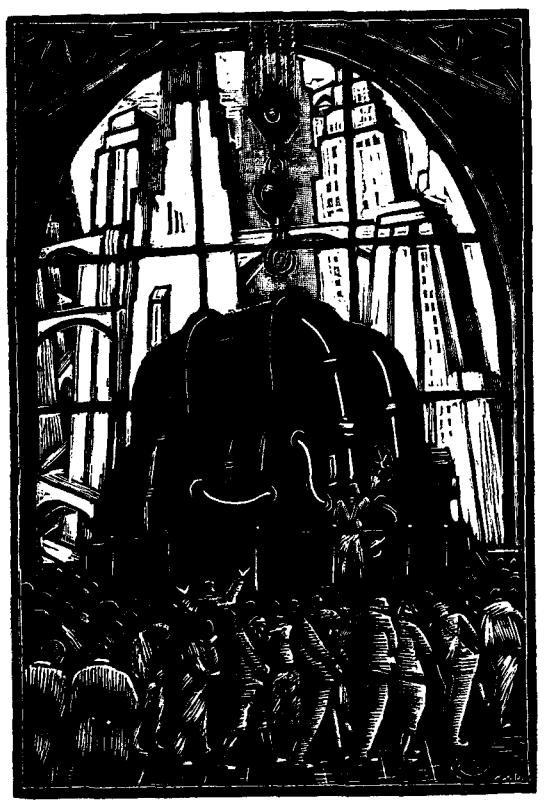

THE AMERICA OF THE FUTURE?
Reproduced from "Machine Made Man," by Silas Bent (Farrar & Rinehart)

As It May Be

THE WORLD IN 2030 A. D. By THE EARL OF BIRKENHEAD. New York: Brewer and Warren, Inc. 1930.

Reviewed by GEOFFREY PARSONS
Author of "The Stream of History"

GIVEN a man's predictions for the future, it is not hard to deduce his quality and faith. For nowhere else can wish-thinking have so free a play. Here is the best opportunity anyone of us can find to do a thorough job of shattering and remoulding. The possibilities are so limitless and the probabilities lie so far beyond calculation that however one may disguise the process with elaborate rationalization, wishing prevails. To be god if only before a typewriter is strong air to breathe.

The pity is that Lord Birkenhead did not confine his guesses to the fields of politics and social custom wherein he had wide experience and a clear bias to illuminate his forecast. Confronting science in 2030, he could only read over J. B. S. Haldane and put down as probable or certain for 2030 ectogenesis and the rest of the Haldane fantastics. Why Mr. Haldane should have felt so bitterly over Lord Birkenhead's snatching and written at length to berate him it is hard to understand. Sincerer flattery it would be hard to find. But that was one of Lord Birkenhead's extraordinary talents—he could inspire more rancor with less effort than any Englishman of his generation.

The chapters on Everyday Life and World Polity are, in contrast, and by any standard, delightful reading. The predictions are no more probable than those involving scientific speculations but they are based on first hand observations of the finest quality. Here Lord Birkenhead's style cuts clean. It is in a Swiss atmosphere that he envisages our descendants a century hence, a mountain air "less genial, less charitable, less mellow than the autumn air which has now superseded the romantic fogs of the nineteenth century." Their attitude will be inspired chiefly by "a dispassionate lust for scientific inquiry." Here one touches the secret of Lord Birkenhead's outlook. It is not science that he hymns so much as the feeling-tone which he thinks it may create:

(*Continued on page* 304)

"The Promise of American Life"*

By Henry Seidel Canby

I PUT the title of this essay in quotation marks to indicate that it belongs to someone else,—that I should never have been so rash as to choose it, if it had not been given.

Nothing is really promised from now on, in American life. We have returned to the pioneer stage, where everything, even what race we are to be, is in doubt. As in the earliest pioneer days, when a continent undeveloped, potential, menacing loomed above and behind the little settlements of the Atlantic seaboard in vast forests and unmeasured acreage, so now loom about us gigantic potentialities. The industrial development of the United States, its wealth, its still unexploited resources, its widespread education of a sort, its standards of living, even its culture, promise nothing, or at least nothing that we should be wise to take as a promise. There were ages of promise which anyone could believe in—the mid eighteenth century, the late nineteenth century. They ended in 1900—with the war—tomorrow—certainly they have ended for those willing to face the facts.

Promises of course this country does still make, but we are free to doubt or interpret them, and above all to ask, are they promises for America or for Americans? That question is one that must be asked, and whether the answer leads to a hope or a certainty, it is at least worth expanding and testing.

The extravagant promises for American life which are so familiar in presidential messages and in feature advertising lose their unity under analysis. They speak of the spread of industrial benefits and dwell with the loving kindness of a miser upon the machines and machine products that make living cleaner, quicker, and more varied. They say that the American standard of living, by which they mean an automobile, a radio, a bathtub, an elementary education, a hygienic environment, and a savings bank account, will soon be general. And nothing in this essay is to be construed as deprecating these benefits. They are solid, and they are as good a measure as can be found of what precisely the United States as a political and economic organization has accomplished in one hundred and fifty years. But without quibble it may be said that they, and all the apparatus of business industrialism, and in a less measure, of agricultural improvement that they represent, are an achievement for America rather than Americans. It is clear that Americans have become more comfortable, it is probable that they live longer, it is certain that knowledge of things in general—foreign countries, mechanical processes, ways and means of living—is more widely distributed among them, but they are not more contented, not probably as happy, and certainly no wiser in either the art of living or in the conduct of their affairs. What is more significant, public respect can scarcely be said to fasten upon men and women of as high and promising a type as in earlier decades. We have more lions but they howl and grunt more often than roar. The promise of what a little while ago was called the Great Age of Prosperity (and will be again) is in things rather than men, and is therefore a promise which may be *for* things rather than men.

It may seem a contradiction to add that social welfare work is the great American promise. It is not a contradiction. When the streets are cloudy with gasoline exhaust, and the electric signs flare, and the papers are full of crude appeals to barbarism, and the memory of yesterday's journey is of a countryside torn up by real estate developments and littered with the broken discards of a mechanical age, the American remembers the immense energies of the movement for social betterment and is comforted. He thinks of universities built and rebuilt in a decade, of incomparable hospitals, of ten thousand organizations for improving the lot of everything and everyone from roadsides to pigs and geniuses. And he is right to be proud, and it is only fools who deprecate this mass progress and praise Europe in comparison where leisure is said still to be possible and beauty to be had for the seeing, wilfully ignorant of the plain fact that if they themselves were caught in the European struggle, they might long for a country in the making where will and power were both behind the attempt to make food, health, pleasure, and knowledge available for all.

But the promise of social betterment is at the most a prophecy that the millions may some day live as decently as the thousands have always lived. It is a promise of lifted averages, not a promise of a better life. Where in the wide range of social welfare work, whether in our educational institutions, through religion, philanthropy, hygiene, the arts, or civics, is there any evidence of the production of better men and women, of keener minds, with more power to lead, or a better sense for living, and more potentiality of achievement? Our population knows more because civilization knows more, but can it do more, relatively, with what it knows?

This vast apparatus of democratic uplift, with all the benefits it is undeniably conferring, is a machine for raising the average of mankind to a level upon which they can encounter without too much risk the mechanical world that has been made for them, use its machines, endure its nervous wear and tear, escape some of its dangers, and be able to go higher if there is anyone to lift them. It is like the Roman organization which kept the empire going after its vitality had decayed. It is a preservative, but not a real promise for the future, for no one can be certain how, or how long, it will be used. If a hundred or so men and women should give over their places to creatures of routine and crystallization sub-

*In somewhat different form this essay will be printed in a symposium entitled "Behold America," to be published shortly by Farrar & Rinehart.

This Week

"Two Years."
Reviewed by OAKLEY JOHNSON.
"Taking the Curtain Call."
Reviewed by WILLIAM LYON PHELPS.
"The Uncelestial City."
Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER.
"Staying with Relations."
Reviewed by STANLEY WENT.
"Best Seller."
Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN.
"Seven Tales and Alexander."
Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT.
"Vagabonds."
Reviewed by PHILLIPS CARLETON.
John Misletoe. XVI.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Next Week

Children's Book Number

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servient to their own instincts for making organization triumph over vitality, or the apparatus of betterment be grasped by some Napoleon of the machine age, endowments, institutions, foundations, societies, efficiencies could be changed in a decade, without the appearance of altering, into a far extending system for mechanizing society. Social betterment is a guarantee that everyman can, if he wishes, be made worthy of the things that a few have created for him, and no more. But if he remains just everyman, will he learn to wish? There is immense utility in social betterment but no real promise; no more than in the efficient organization of a business, where the moral lapse or intellectual weakening of an individual can bring the whole show into bankruptcy. There is no promise except in individual worth.

Individuality in America has been submerged in direct proportion to the rise of publicity, which is a kind of index of the felt weakness of man in the mass. We have got into the habit of thinking that what the single man thinks and feels is unimportant unless he takes society along with him. Hence publicity for ourselves, and advertising and propaganda generally for others. We are victims of the social welfare complex, capitalists as much as socialists. And from this unhealthy distrust of what a man is worth unless he carries millions of others with him, springs a great deal of bad philosophy, much cynicism, and many curious discontents and lacks in self-respect afflicting the successful even more than the failures, and quite obscuring the real source of power and happiness in society which lies always, as every poet, philosopher, and theologian has reiterated, in the inner life of the man himself. There is plenty of evidence of distressed and rebellious individualism in current literature.

Current American literature is a striking document in support of the proposition that the promises of prosperity, efficiency, and social progress do not satisfy acute and sensitive minds. American literature (regardless of its more or less value as art) is predominantly, and most curiously in so prosperous a country, a literature of protest and discontent.

American literature has always been a literature of protest. The great names—Irving, Cooper, Hawthorne, Emerson, Poe, Thoreau, Whitman, Melville, Twain—all register protest against the way in which their America was going. They are satirists, like Irving and Twain, rebels, like Poe, Thoreau, Melville, denouncers, like Cooper, preachers, like Emerson and Whitman. But the discontent of their successors is peevish, and is not, certainly, sprung from love.

I do not now refer to the fulfillers of wish psychology who support the advertising of the magazines of wide circulation. They *seem* to be content. That kind of writing has made real literature in other countries, but practically never here. Nor do I range among the important discontents the post-war grumblings of the first generation intellectuals who rediscovered Europe before they had learned to live in America, and attacked New York, Chicago, Oshkosh, and points west because they were not like what they supposed Paris and Munich to be.

* * *

The literature of discontent which I have in mind is the most American literature we have, and it is bounded by neither class, race, quality, or philosophical creed. Eight to ten years ago I should have drawn my examples from the novels of the farm and the small town—from Fannie Hurst, Sherwood Anderson, Sinclair Lewis, Edna Ferber, and most of all from dozens of minor novels which reflected an active dislike of a rural environment and looked for hope toward Chicago and New York. Today I should get as good instances from the fiction of the great cities—especially from the literature of New York. Its more ironic and sophisticated nature does not hide the inner resemblance to what had gone before. Dreiser, Van Vechten, Elmer Davis, Morley Callaghan, John Dos Passos, Viña Delmar, *et al.*, *et al.*, *et al.*, are all in their very different fashions slapping at the annoyances of their American environment. Sometimes it is vulgarity and sometimes it is noise, sometimes it is nostalgia for simpler times, sometimes just an oppression by the weight of restless masses. Of course there are many other aspects of these novels, and I do not mean for an instant to say that they are the only American novels, or even the most important in the art of fiction. But there are enough of them. No constant reader can fail to believe that they are significant.

A comparison with English contemporary fiction is illuminating. Where—to put the question squarely—can one find in American fiction with any depth of feeling, that affection for environment which is still common enough in England? J. B. Priestley, for example, is a rather hard-boiled Yorkshireman, with none of the passionate love of the land that one finds in the south of England, and yet I do not know where to look in America today for a book about New York so loving as his London story of "Angel Pavement," or a novel with such a liking for the ups and downs and roundabouts of one's native environment as "The Good Companions." Or A. P. Herbert's "Water Gypsies," which is certainly not a cheerful story, but has for background a grimy, wet London to be loved.

* * *

Twenty-five and fifty years ago there were plenty of American stories that loved their America. They may have been sentimental, but one remembered them when one traveled in Louisiana or New England or California or Virginia, with a warmth that transferred itself to the landscape. But now the typical American scene is a point of departure for the story, and it is not too much to say that among the novelists that count, the background is prevailingly used as an irritant for the hero or heroine. An American "Forsyte Saga" in our present mood is unthinkable. Even the cheerful Louis Bromfield is fascinated but not charmed by his Middle West and his New York.

This, mark well, differs from the protestantism of the great Americans spoken of above. They, if one excepts Poe and Melville, were intense lovers of their native place. Never was soil more lovingly celebrated than Whitman's Paumanok, Irving's Hudson Valley, the Concord of Thoreau and Emerson, even the morbid Massachusetts of Hawthorne. They protested against spiritual trends. So do these moderns perhaps, but their distinction is that they do not *like* their environment. The lyric praise of the cliff-hung beauties of New York will be held against my argument. It will not hold. New York is a drug or a stimulant to these writers. It is not praised as home, but only as a Thalassa which their imagination creates but cannot bring close. They love New York as one loves a play in the theatre. It remains always a potential enemy, hard, dangerous, and never home.

I am not concerned with the reasons for this American attitude, so much as with the fact itself. Although we are not a young civilization any more, our roots are still torn up more often and more extensively than with others. That is one cause of our discontent, but it does not explain the very definite set against the way of life in the United States which takes out its spite in a dislike of any *here* where our stories are laid.

I do not know how it may be with classes, with the workmen in Mr. Ford's factories, or the Country Club crowd in one of Mr. Hergesheimer's Pennsylvania cities, or the young brokers of New York—they may be content and satisfied though if they look the second they certainly do not act the first. But assuredly the individual of intelligence and refinement, especially when he is an artist and writer, is not content. He sees the old decorum of life broken, and regrets its lost stability if not its dulness. He knows that his nerves are in the way of his leisure, believes that his social contacts have gained in variety but lost in that tranquillity which means more than clever talk. He feels an increased tempo and at the same time a stiffening of habit, as if the whole machine were being geared to more rapid profit-making. He feels this in the university as much as in Wall Street. Time bears hard upon him. Illusions have been swept away to leave the prime illusion that keeping up with the procession means that you are going forward. He distrusts the quality of his life and pettishly strikes at the country or town of his birth exactly as the artisan irritably flings a marred mould on the dump heap. These fields that dully bound the once great hopes of the pioneers, these ugly industrial cities that are rich enough for everything except to be livable, this great metropolis that is tingling with life and yet without amenity, there is nothing to love here! And nothing for long stays the same. Our American earth changes faster than we do! That is his mood.

And observe that this attitude of satiric discontent is just another phase of the wish psychology which is so characteristic of popular American fiction, and makes it almost riotously cheerful. The latter blinks reality by inventing farms, cities, successes in its dreams—makes war humorous, industry an epic battle, love definitive, luxury dignified, happiness an absolute existing always in the penthouse above. The discontents refuse this wish world, and instead of escaping reality, stay at home and curse it. There is a great deal in Spengler's dictum. The most diverse works of art of a given period *do* have an underlying relationship in philosophy, however they may differ in temperament.

I might easily extend this analysis to the drama, and to poetry, citing O'Neill, Kauffman, Connolly, Robert Frost, Robinson Jeffers, Edwin Arlington Robinson. From poetry and drama the same conclusion could be drawn. It is a rough generalization, but it is true enough to mean something, and this is what I think it means.

It means that the sense of individualism is still so strong in the United States as to warp and quite throw off their balance a whole generation of writers. For it is nonsense to say that America is unlovable. The travelers who come home from Europe deploring this and that, deplore it, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, not because they want to live abroad, but because they would add this or that factor—whether café life, cathedrals, or a confident intellectualism—to American life. It is not the American country they dislike, but the dull decline of its inhabitants from pioneer energy, and the hot dog stand in the pine grove. They are annoyed at what has been done to America. They are impatient, as the hopeful have been from the beginning here, to make a Utopia, and see instead industrialism in the ugly phase of its success. But most of all, they feel that their wishes, their ideas of living, in this swirl of social forces can no longer be made to count.

Literature suffers, for it begins in its stronger specimens to be tinctured with local satire, so that when we get a book that lifts out of our uproar and grime into the gentle irony of universals, like "The Bridge of San Luis Rey," we rush after it as if it were a portent, whereas it was only a relief. Yet if there is promise in American life, it is to be found in this same disagreeable irritability. It shows that we will not lie down and rest, will not love our hills and have affection even for the smells of our cities, until man—the sensitive, intelligent, civilized man of the minority—begins to get in better adjustment with his environment. Whether it is that man, or the environment, or both that must be changed, is not so clear.

* * *

I do not think I place too much importance upon the dogged discontent of Ernest Hemingway, the mystic morbid discontent of William Faulkner, the strong lyric discontent of Willa Cather, the sharp scoffing discontent of Sinclair Lewis, the powerful creative discontent of Robert Frost (who is a phase beyond the others, and writes with, not against, his soil), the rather finicky and emotionalized discontent of Glenway Wescott, the burly self-satisfied discontent of H. L. Mencken, the philosophic discontents of the *Nation*, the *New Republic*, or the New Humanists, the wailing discontent of the New York aliens, the good-natured ironical discontent of the *New Yorker* (which comes nearer loving a great American city intelligently than any other American agency). For literature with any genuineness in it contains some of the future in a kind of electric charge induced from the present by the sensitive imagination. And while it cannot be used for exact prophecy, it is seldom belied by events. It is the imaginative who feel ahead for us, and it is they who write our books.

The revolt of the individual which these books portend will not be a revolt of *littérateurs* and artists. It will not result in anything which you can find described in them. No one knows what it will be or do. But these books, and plenty of other evidence, show to my mind that, whatever happens in economics and government, it is coming. We are not going to be static like France, nor spend all our energies on national welfare, like England, where eccentricity is fortunately still abundant. We shall not always go for our records of progress to the health and literacy records of the Foundations.

And shall Trelawney die, and shall Trelawney die,
A hundred thousand Cornishmen will know the reason why.

It is a feeling a little like that of the old song that is getting itself expressed. And I think there is more promise in it than in all the social agencies combined.

The spectacle of a belligerent literati flinging their typewriters at the sottishness of the society they work for may seem more humorous than promising. Of course the promise is not in the writers but in what

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they express. What optimism I have is drawn from the conviction that there are thousands of oppressed individuals in what seems to be a standardized country who are getting nearer and nearer the point at which they will begin to think themselves out of mass habits and use the still existing American opportunity to create acceptable ways of living. The writers are their safety valve, through which the steam is blowing.

If such a minority does exist, then the usual American bogeys need not be too depressing. There is mediocrity in our universities, mean commercialism in politics, a confused morality, a levelling toward a rather debased bourgeois type, lawlessness, vulgarity, and an increasing cynicism. But there was more commercialism in the 'seventies, more corruption in the 'eighties, more violence in the 'fifties, a muddier morality in the 'seventeen nineties, a greater debasement of type on the old frontier, feebler education by and large at any time one chooses. Furthermore the European bogeys, while less advertised, are grimmer.

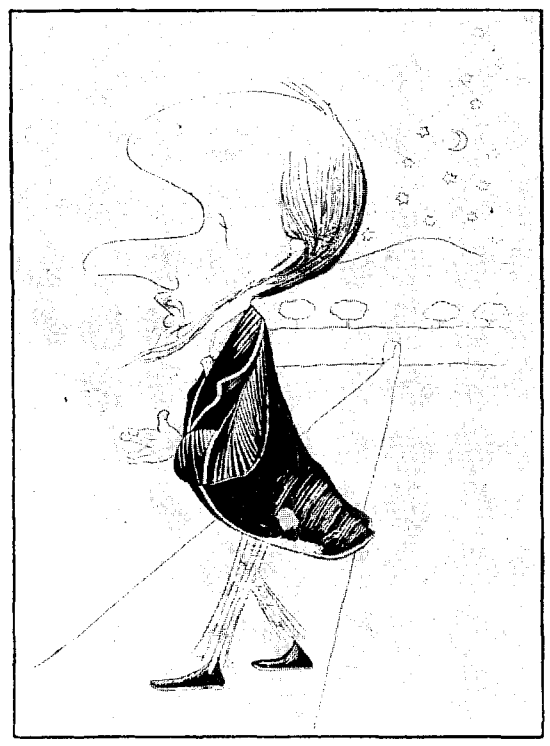
I am expressing my faith here in the will, although not exactly as the New Humanists are using the term. I have more confidence at the moment in a gain by releasing human instincts for love, gaiety, adventure, delight, than in checks, but it must be a release controlled by an inquiring and determined spirit. My own experience is too limited in kinds of men and women to generalize dogmatically, yet it is probably typical. The American one knows and likes to know, either in life or in the discontented books, has a good will to live a civilized life, where leisure balances work, tastes find their object, and the desire for self-approval gets its satisfaction out of something less crude and more human than power without content, or achievement without its fruits in happiness. But he finds himself exceptionally weighed upon and confused and misdirected by the mass and acceleration of American customs. Opinion sweeps in earthquake waves, the single voice is only a radio squeak that no one listens to, or turns off if it is annoying. The individual who makes his own code and lives by it seems like a feather drifting up in a snow storm. He is alone with his own consciousness, which is good religion but very hard conduct. It is the sense of a hurrying multitude pulling, the feeling of landmarks gone in a general drift, which makes the writers so annoyed with the false stability of what used to seem home.

* * *

What *is* this reassertion of individualism—a term that sounds like an economist's definition? If it were one thing, it would not be enough, and if it could be defined sharply it would certainly be too adequate for a promise. Nor do I feel responsible in this argument for a definition, certainly not for a moral one. I stick at the assertion that there is plenty of energetic individuality, good and bad, alive if not active in America, and that it is for the man, not the movement, to take the next step. To throw off the weight of conventional thinking, to shape a policy and follow it, to mark out a way of life and pursue it—these are very hard to do today. But they are easier when thought of as the individual's concern, not as movements. The first job is to get numbers out of our thinking. And since from Dreiser's "American Tragedy" to "Babbitt" and "The Sun Also Rises," all typical American literature has been vibrant with criticism of failure to stand up and be more than an echo of drifting, it is my guess that the next area of time may produce a magnificent crop of rebels against running with the crowd.

To return to the figure with which I began—and with a subject like this one it is difficult to speak except through figures and platitudes—we are back again in a pioneer stage not too absurdly different from the plight of the first settlements. There it was always a minority that could not be what they wanted and risked physical hardship and danger to get their own way of life. Here there is again a restless minority, and the entire question is whether those destined by ideas, temperament, and circumstance to belong to it, will risk mental hardship and economic danger by living and thinking in their own best way. The promise of American life is that they still can do so, in spite of the pressure of plutocracy on one side and standardization on the other. Have they the nerve to live like gentlemen and scholars, honest men and proud, in a society that doesn't put much of a price on any of those virtues? For now that the proletariat in this country is at least as safe from starvation as the intellectuals, and we have approximated the conditions of the old Oriental monarchies where everyone is equal to everyone else except the very rich, I know no test of the country so searching as the question, is it a place where a cultivated gentleman, willing and able to work, sufficiently intellectual and esthetic, and more likely to improve the tone and morale of the community just by being born there than to increase its production or his own bank account,—is it a place where such a man is going to be able to live decently and with reasonable content? And the answer obviously, is,—that depends chiefly upon the gentleman. If he throws up his hands, so do we. But why should he?

He is, for this generation, Sumner's forgotten man. If I have not too narrowly defined him, it is for such a gentleman that the improvements in societies chiefly exist, since they aim, or should aim, to make possible the reduplication of his type. And yet he cannot be manufactured, he must make himself intellectually and spiritually, and his way of life also. He does not, like his feudal prototype, live on the country, but if he does not live in it, so much the worse for the country. The great social welfare machine can incubate a billion humans well equipped with all the apparatus of civilization. But he must make himself. He is, at the moment, forgotten in our programs. Is he self-forgetting?



A Cartoon, by Max Beerbohm, of Henry Arthur Jones. Reproduced from "Taking the Curtain Call"

Better than Fiction

TWO YEARS. By LIAM O'FLAHERTY. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by OAKLEY JOHNSON

THE good things about this travel narrative are the fascinating adventures it relates, the provoking ideas that accompany and follow the incidents in the author's mind, and the unself-conscious nobility and even richness of language in which everything is told. The style is really admirable: the fusion of conversational tone with, on occasion, a "grand manner" is perfect.

"Two Years" is the record of Liam O'Flaherty's life for the two years following the war, in which he traveled—or tramped—over various parts of the world—Turkey, South America, Canada, the United States—working for short periods as sailor, stoker, farmhand, factoryhand, hotel porter, and so on. There was fist-fighting on board ship, consorting with bums in Rio de Janeiro, delirium tremens in Smyrna, temporary conversion to the I. W. W. in western Canada, attempts at a higher life in Boston, wasting of money in Atlantic City, love-making in Greenwich Village. We are shown all kinds of people, from Circassian beauties to lousy, stinking outcasts. It is a narrative of continuous fascination and continual variety.

All the time that O'Flaherty was traveling "about the earth," storing his soul and restoring his health ("the greatest pleasure was to feel strong and indolent, so strong and indolent that I laughed when I stretched my limbs") he was also thinking about himself and about the world, coming to conclusions about religion and progress and women, building up a personal philosophy. That is why "Two Years" is likely to survive as a book: it is not merely a story of travel adventures, but a record of the maturing of a man's mind, and an expression of that mind's convictions. O'Flaherty is strong, courageous, contemporary-minded, aggressively sincere; he has already published a half-dozen books, and is only thirty-four years old. If he continues, his will be a name to set down as a companion to Robert Louis Stevenson and Laurence Sterne.

Henry Arthur Jones

TAKING THE CURTAIN CALL. The Life and Letters of Henry Arthur Jones. By DORIS ARTHUR JONES. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1930. $4.

Reviewed by WILLIAM LYON PHELPS

THE best two periods of creative activity in the English drama were the thirty years from 1590 to 1620 and the thirty years from 1890 to 1920. As the life of Ben Johnson spanned the entire first epoch so the life of Henry Arthur Jones covered the second. When Jones began to write plays, the British drama seemed dead. From the death of Ben Johnson in 1637 to the year 1890, there were only three plays produced that survive both as good literature and good theatre. Sheridan wrote two of them and Goldsmith the other; and all three came within a period of seven years. It used to be a stock statement in histories of English literature that Dryden's "All for Love" was the "best play" since Shakespeare. As a matter of fact, "All for Love" is a pretentious bore. Historians and critics used to speak of the brilliant wit of Congreve; but it ought now to be clear that the wit of Congreve is slight in comparison with that of Shaw. The entire Restoration drama failed to produce a single play of imaginative power such as will bear comparison with any one of a half-dozen plays by Barrie.

Jones saw the modern English drama rise out of nothing, and reach its second highest peak at the dawn of the twentieth century. Bliss was it then to be alive; I knew we were living in great times. After more than one hundred barren years, came Jones, Pinero, Wilde, Shaw, Barrie, Galsworthy, Synge, Yeats, Barker, Dunsany, Ervine, and others. And Jones, though he lived to see new movements in the drama with which he had no intellectual sympathy, was himself a part of the great revival that perhaps made those new things possible. His own best plays, "The Liars," "Mrs. Dane's Defence," "The Hypocrites," rank with the best by his friend Pinero.

Jones was brought up in a puritanically strict Evangelical household, and was not allowed to enter the doors of a theatre until he was eighteen. But once within that magic land, he never left it; his entire career was devoted to the stage. Up to the outbreak of the war, the theatre was never out of his thoughts. He saw and heard everything in terms of drama. How exclusively he was a playwright is seen by a curious fact mentioned in this book. He never wrote a personal letter without hearing in his mind every word spoken aloud.

* * *

Some will say that the World War was in itself so great a drama that it made stage plays seem futile. As a matter of fact, the historian in the year 2200 may regard the World War as what one thoughtful historian has already called the career of Napoleon, a "colossal irrelevancy."

Among its innumerable casualties, was Henry Arthur Jones's sense of humor. During the succeeding years, he unfortunately felt it to be his duty to expose and to chastise two of his intimate friends, Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells. He believed they were traitors to the British Empire and to civilization. I used to beg him to let these men alone, and go back to his job. I well remember a long conversation I had with him one day at the Brevoort House in New York when I besought him, if only for the sake of his health, to stop his fulminations. For I told him this kind of thing would kill him, and it did. He reminded me of an exhausted man running hard in pursuit of something he could not overtake. He told me with that sad eloquence born of perversity that it was his duty to America to show up these traitors. "You Americans do not see that Shaw and Wells are poisoning your minds with their pacifism, socialism, and communism; you all laugh at their wit and humor, but you do not realize how dangerous they are to your institutions." Alas, he did not realize the obvious in those days; he did not realize it until he broke down, when it was too late.

It is good to turn away from these years of futility—faithfully and honestly dealt with by his

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daughter in this biography—to the cause which during the period of his prosperity, held full possession of his heart. He not only added to the good plays of the time, his evangelism glowed in the innumerable lectures he delivered and the pamphlets that poured from his pen. From his pen; for his handwriting was a revelation of his personality. On thick white paper with dead black ink, I really believe his letters were legible twenty feet away. In all this propaganda on the theatre he fought steadfastly for two things. First, for the drama as distinguished from the theatre; that is, for ideas as distinguished from mere entertainment. Second, for the *publication* of plays, with the resulting challenge to literary as well as to dramatic criticism. When he began to write, the publication of new plays was almost unknown in England. He lived to see the custom become universal, and it is not too much to say that such a consummation owed more to him than to any other man.

I do not know of any creative writer who made more of his natural talents than Henry Arthur Jones. There have been many men of greater endowment who have not gone nearly so far. By persistent study and unremitting effort, by tremendous energy that led to frequent collapses, he reached a commanding position in the art he loved.

His daughter has made an admirable biography. Knowing him better and more intimately than any other person now living, she has not let her relation to him obscure the truth. This book combines inner, accurate knowledge with the impartiality of a judge; for most children become the judges of their parents, even though they refuse to hand down decisions to posterity. She has given us the facts in her father's public career; and she has revealed the man as he was, with his faults as well as his virtues. He had a strongly marked personality; his terrific convictions made him obstinate. But he was not only a good man—he was essentially lovable. And in addition to the revelation of his character, not the least interesting part of this work are the long letters from Max Beerhohm, Bernard Shaw, Henry Irving and many other of his famous contemporaries. It is a biography of Jones and a history of the modern English theatre.

Readers will also be grateful for the chronological list of all the plays and for a good index.

Satire *con Sordino*

THE UNCELESTIAL CITY. By HUMBERT WOLFE. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1930. $3.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

THE limited circle of readers who were acquainted with "Kensington Gardens" and "The Unknown Goddess" regarded their author with fondness and a proper, though not exactly voluble, admiration. With the publication of "Requiem," however, and its ensuing popularity the wrangling began and the controversialists dragged Humbert Wolfe from the zenith of adulation to the nadir of contempt. The extremists will doubtless exercise their vocabulary on Mr. Wolfe's latest work; they have, in fact, begun. I have already seen one reference to "The Uncelestial City" as "Mr. Wolfe's continued display of staccato mannerisms" and another hailing it as "not merely a great poem but a great social document."

I wish that I, who have enjoyed Mr. Wolfe's experiments from the beginning, could endorse the last unqualified enthusiasm. But I have uncomfortable misgivings. I harbor, perhaps unjustly, the suspicion that Mr. Wolfe has determined to make himself a major poet by *force majeure*. This is, of course, a comprehensible ambition and there is no reason why it should not be gratified except for the fact that neither intention nor accumulation can quite accomplish it. A composer may change from ariettas to oratorios without ever changing his idiom; and, though Mr. Wolfe's designs have become more fugal and symphonic, the manner, at its best, remains *grazioso*.

The program of "The Uncelestial City," like "Requiem," is large. Eked out by a series of prose "Arguments," which attempt to give the composition a unity it does not intrinsically possess, the story begins with a deceased judge (the late Justice Crayfish) before the gates of Heaven. The gatekeeper who, it seems, is also a fiddler, tells him that the way to the Celestial City lies through the uncelestial one he has left and the judge retraces his steps, accompanied by the obliging and explanatory violinist. Mr. Crayfish thus reviews his father's influence, his own youth, his debates and dreams at Oxford, his first love. High-lights in his career are revealed: his marriage of convenience, his legal defence of a prostitute, his troubles with his "modern" daughter, his sentencing a poet on a charge of blasphemy, his eminence as a "hanging judge"—in short the progressive denial of his dreams.

It is a curious and inconsistent composition, contradictory even in its own terms. It purports to be a long poem, but it is actually a series of separate poems unevenly, and, often, awkwardly strung together. The heavenly fiddler—a combination of Greek chorus, St. Peter, and Mr. Wolfe's own Apollo-Pierrot—is interesting at first, but, in the end, appears too palpable a device for introducing more or less irrelevant lyrics. Since the poems are not woven in the story but the "plot" fitted about them, the result is both unsatisfying as narrative and unconvincing as documentation.

The inconsistency deepens when the tissue of the work is examined. "The Uncelestial City" is patently a satire on modern life; but it is a satire surrounded by too many buttercups and nightingales. Mr. Wolfe seems to think that the antidote for factories, sex-madness, and all mechanized civilization is a daffodil. And so what barbs itself as satire is merely the extension of a sentimentality. It is propelled by the stock poetic attitude, just as Mr. Wolfe trusts his images, with too false a security, to stock "poetic" properties. It is curious to see so good a craftsman mingling his mundainities with the minor poet's *mélange* of Camelot, Babylon, "the green phalanx of Marathon," the Argo, "Paris trembling when Helen walked upon the wall," "Odysseus, that ancient wizard," Hannibal, Eden, "beauty moulded by Praxiteles," "the immutable city of the heart's Rome," Agamemnon, Endymion, and Gramarye—all in the first forty-five pages of a satire on life in the twentieth century. Even the conceits are "dated." The eighteen 'nineties saw street-walkers as "fallen Marys" and "soiled doves" beneath the lamp-posts which euphuistically became "the iron lilies of the Strand"; Mr. Wolfe's prostitutes are, incredible as it may seem, "crocus-girls."

This is the more surprising since, when Mr. Wolfe elects to be sharp, his incisions are more savage than those of any poet living. Beneath its suave contours "The Uncelestial City" bristles with acerbities like:

> You cannot hope
> to bribe or twist
> Thank God! the
> British journalist.
>
> But, seeing what
> the man will do
> unbribed, there's no
> occasion to.

Often irony and wit are blended in true Heinesque proportions and such quatrains as the following are the happy or, rather, the brilliantly mordant result:

> Well, that's full circle, John. We might, of course,
> be gentlemen of the town—the sporting kind,
> Who leave their clubs as though they'd left their horse
> upstairs, and rather have him on their mind.

Sometimes the dart is feathered with light pleasantries, but the arrow goes home no less accurately. Many of Wolfe's slily twisted quotations make portions of the book a parody, though this species of parody does not parade itself as such. Such a feat in a comparatively new *genre* is the terse book review beginning:

> "Star and not song,
> sweet bird, thy stave is,"
> wrote Jobson imi-
> tating Davies.

This review seems to have caught inconsistency from its subject; beginning with censure it is concluding with praise. Such a course is, I am afraid, inevitable. Allow the worst: score Mr. Wolfe's too limpid loquacity, deplore his too freely running rhyme, conclude that it seems easier for him to sing than to keep silent. But even the least sympathetic critic will have to admit this poet's technical dexterities; his subtle nuances that slip from the full, round cadence to the "slant" or "suspended" rhyme and back to the rich tonic; his almost imperceptible shifts from tenderness to cruelty; his mastery of carefully controlled effects. Whatever it may lack, Mr. Wolfe's, like his ghostly fiddler's, is never a mean performance. It is virtuoso-playing. The instrument may be Heine's, but the fingers are the fingers of Paganini.

As It May Be

(*Continued from page* 301)

Thus by 2030 men and women will seem, judged by our standards, harsh and unemotional. They will have recaptured and transformed into new fashions, the precision, lucid sense, and keen criticism which distinguished the small educated world of the eighteenth century.

Here is Lord Birkenhead, a man born out of his time, looking plaintively forward to a return of his longed for past. What a brilliant figure he would have cut in it—will cut in it, if his wish-thinking comes true and he is permitted to return in 2030!

If only Lord Birkenhead, instead of naively and reverentially worshipping his scientific god, Mr. Haldane, could have swung science around his head with equal zest! Suppose that instead of humbly taking for granted what no real scientist pretends to be sure of, that endless power will be forthcoming from the atom or the tides, Lord Birkenhead had speculated around the other possibility, that coal and the essential metals might be exhausted in a century and the whole industrial civilization collapse. Here would surely be the shortest cut back to the Johnsonian era. The last automobile halts on the highway; a few lone airships spend the final drops of fuel; the vital railroads run by white power; on the seas the clipper ships return. We should like to see Mr. Chesterton and Lord Birkenhead enjoying the scene together from a convenient cloud.

But it is easy to forgive Lord Birkenhead his weakness for the pseudo-scientist and the scientific experts generally; he is such an expert himself in the field of human leadership where the break-up of human atoms has been supplying illimitable energy for centuries. Consider this as a probable diet for your great, great, great grandchildren:

So intimately is the history of civilization bound up with the expression of gigantic personalities, that a single individual may arise in Europe or America to reshape the mould of life before 2030. Another and a greater Wesley may call back our grandchildren to fervent emotional Pantheism, and recall the religious wars which racked the seventeenth century. A new and delicious Helen, inflaming the laboratories, may launch a thousand airships and bring to ruin New York's topless towers. . . . A mad dictator, jealous of Western progress, may precipitate a war, which will finally burn up and destroy Western civilization, so that coming generations in China and New Zealand will know it for no more than a memory and a name.

The whole chapter on world polity is shot with arrogant and persuasive surmise. He conceives that in the far future Canada and the United States may be forced into more than an alliance. If so, it is Lord Birkenhead's hope that circumstances may some day undo "the breach caused by the obstinate stupidity of George III and the indolent subservience of Lord North."

One writes in the present tense of these vivid guesses; it is difficult to recall that the first prediction of the volume to be proved true swiftly was "that I am unlikely to witness either the vindications or the confusions of my vaticinatory efforts."

"The war between Danish authors and publishers, on the one hand, and lending libraries on the other, has taken an interesting turn," says *John o'London's Weekly*. "It started last spring, it will be recalled, when the Arctic explorer, Peter Freuchens, forbade anyone to lend a copy of his travel-book, 'Nordkaper,' without permission. The legality of his action was tested in the Supreme Court, and it decided in his favor. Evidently encouraged by this ruling, the Copenhagen publishing firm of Hasselback is now enclosing in all its books a slip notifying lending libraries that if they want to put the books on their list before April, 1932, they must buy a special voucher costing as much as the book. The publishers and authors contend that the activities of the lending libraries seriously affect their sales."

The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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Playing with Romance

STAYING WITH RELATIONS. By Rose Macaulay. New York: Horace Liveright. $2.50.

Reviewed by Stanley Went

MISS MACAULAY here has some very good fun with her own profession, and in having it misses few tricks out of the novelist's bag. In a romantic and exotic setting she brings the psychological approach to bear on a love triangle, which reaches its climax in a kidnapping inspired by a smooth villain, who has pilfered from the Guatemalan ranch of an English judge the treasure of the Mayas, long hidden in an ancient Spanish church; and though the kidnapped heroine returns in safety to seek back the love of her husband by the time-honored device of announcing, "I am about to become a mother," the villain escapes the hot pursuit of amateur detectives over sea and mountains and finally outwits his pursuers by recourse to an airplane and the company of a revolutionary general.

It is quite certain that many plausible details of Miss Macaulay's story are omitted in this breathless and inadequate synopsis. Enough has been remembered and set down, however, to demonstrate the point that there is very little in the whole field of ancient and modern fiction (including translation into the Scandinavian and all moving-picture rights) which Miss Macaulay has failed to introduce. Out of this House that Jack Built she manages, amazingly, to achieve some sort of unity through her principal character, Catherine Gray, a young English novelist, specializing in the interpretation of character, who accepts an invitation to visit her American aunt, relict of Hack Higgins, Iowa oil king, at the Hacienda del Capitan, Perdida, Guatemala.

With Aunt Belle are her new husband, Sir Richmond Cradock, English judge, and his four children; the coldly virginal Claudia—the characterizations are those of Catherine, the penetrating novelist of character—the indolently dilettante Benet, the sensuous and seductive Julia, and the sturdy and unimaginative child Meg. There are also Isie, the gloriously vital daughter of Aunt Belle by the late lamented Hack, "perfect in health, in poise, in that vigorous clear-cut handsomeness of color and line which distinguishes splendid young Americans," and Adrian her adoring and charming but rather colorless husband. Just as local atmosphere we have Father Jacinto, the half-breed parish priest who gets drunk and has three wives, which, as Aunt Belle remarked, "for a Catholic clergyman is three too many." Finally, there is agreeable Mr. Phipps, the next-door neighbor, who plays an important but disconcerting part in the affairs of the Hacienda del Capitan.

Marshalling this array of *dramatis personæ* Miss Macaulay maliciously and wittily shows us the types of characters that Catherine thought all her relations were and then, in the subsequent hectic action, turns them into their precise opposites. The reader has a very amusing time discovering how wrong a professional interpreter of character may be. Incidentally, Miss Macaulay's witty satire would probably make an excellent motion picture played absolutely straight in the best Hollywood manner.

So This Is Publishing!

BEST SELLER. By N. O. Youmans. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by Amy Loveman

THIS, we think, is likely to be one of the most overemphasized books of the year. It is bad as art, bad as morals, bad as story. Granting that every word in it is true, it is yet so false to the whole truth as to be a grotesque instead of a caricature. The tale of "a young man who came to York to write a novel about a young man who came to New York to write a novel," it presents a succession of scenes in which publishing is displayed in some of its most unlovely aspects and publishers' young men are depicted at their drunken excesses. It has, to be sure, some undoubtedly faithful and forceful satire—its description of a sales conference in which a best seller is decided upon and the methods for its promotion are formulated is, we are willing to accept on the authority of those who know, a remarkable piece of reporting—but the general picture evoked is so meretricious, the episodes are so monotonously repetitive, the writing is so unpracticed, the portrayal of Village life so trite and commonplace, that were it not for the fact that it introduces by name or in thin disguise personalities known to all members of the publishing and book world in New York it would be dismissed at once as merely a third-rate novel. It is as gross a falsification of the whole truth about publishing as "The Front Page" was of the whole truth about journalism, and to boot it has nothing of the brilliance of presentation of that uproariously funny play.

Stories without Plot

SEVEN TALES and ALEXANDER. By H. E. Bates. New York: Viking Press. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by Basil Davenport

"ALEXANDER," which gives half its title to this volume, is a long short-story; the other seven tales are very short; they might almost be called sketches, if that did not imply a shallowness which would do them an injustice. They are stories without plot, vessels made to hold each a moment of emotion and all its overtones. Mr. Bates's method is much like that of Katherine Mansfield: he takes a single incident and so records its implications that it stirs the reader with vague feelings for which there is no name, not quite pity, not quite admiration, not quite recognition, not quite surprise, and yet partaking of all of these. Most of these stories are written from the point of view of a child, and all of them recapture to a remarkable degree the child's directness of view and child's undiscriminating interest in everything, regardless of what other people have decided to be interesting. Those stories written purely from inside a child's mind, such as "Alexander" and "The Barber," carry an emotional atmosphere that is only to be expressed by contradictions, a sense of the wonder of everything, which because it is omnipresent the child feels without being aware of it, as one is hardly conscious that one is enjoying fresh air if one has forgotten the feel of indoors. "Alexander" also reveals the confident curiosity of the child who has never been hurt and so is not afraid of anything, an illusory boldness which one does not know whether to destroy or protect, but which touches one with a peculiar poignance.

ROSE MACAULAY

The stories written from a grown person's viewpoint are less strikingly successful. It says much for Mr. Bates that he has been able to take stock of pathetic situations, the death of a gypsy's old mare for instance, and bring to them his own freshness of touch, but still they are less moving than the others. The semi-allegorical fantasies, "The Peach-Tree" and "The King Who Lived on Air," are still less successful. In them the author has tried to introduce symbolism and even satire into his fairyland, but the fairyland vanishes at once; it is like putting a burden upon a soap-bubble.

There is however one story, "The Child," in which Mr. Bates has succeeded brilliantly in combining his two worlds. In it a child looks through a window of lemon-colored glass at a bathing beach until, seized by a sudden impulse, she slips off her clothes and runs down naked to join the fat, scandalized bathers. There the falsely golden world seen through the window-glass, the world of ugliness in bathing suits invaded by the direct, naked child, are clear enough symbols, and like all good symbols express much more than can be expressed in any other way, and yet they do not disturb the simplicity of the atmosphere.

This collection is uneven, and it is to feared that it may not be popular; but the best of the stories have a quality that will greatly commend them to the thoughtful reader: they never indulge themselves in analysis, but they set him at once to analyzing their effect.

Mr. Hamsun at His Best

VAGABONDS. By Knut Hamsun. New York: Coward-McCann. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by Phillips D. Carleton

THIS novel is a strange shift of Mr. Hamsun from the sad, sardonic tales that he has given us in these later years—of the disintegration of an old fixed society, of the survival of the unhappy individualist. He is no longer interested in the movement of a lone figure against a hostile background, and in the strange turns and agonies of this figure; the background has suddenly come alive and absorbed his attention. This volume is a return to the *motif* of the "Growth of the Soil"; the author's interest lies in those people living close to the soil, who, in his eyes, alone live a full life in the slow rhythm of poverty. In them the nature mysticism of the early Nagel has found expression, in a deeper and broader form.

"Vagabonds" is the tragedy of the wanderer, the man uprooted by accident from his natural setting, restless and unsatisfied, moving in an aura of splendor in his youth, that fades to a graceless middle age. Edevart, bred in a small northern village, inured to the hardships of the Lofoten fishing, chief support of his family, is swept out into the world by August, the sailor and hobo. Easy money and hard necessity corrupt his innocence and power for work. The opportune appearance of August sweeps him away time and again from his half-hearted attempts to strike root in one locality or another. His family in the little fishing village, through the slow succession of years, grows up strong in the bonds of local custom. Outside the barriers of this culture, despite their eager and protective affection, and unable to feel at home in any other, Edevart drifts, probably in that great current that was setting towards America and its vaguely realized opportunities.

Mr. Hamsun is reiterating in kindlier mood what has been the theme of other novels, that a man is strong only by virtue of a well knit society, that such a society is pitiably helpless before the inroads of industrialism, which serves only to corrupt and corrode old and kindly bonds. He has completed in this book a study of national character that began in "Growth of the Soil," of those strangely assorted elements in the Norwegian: an extreme practicality and an extraordinary power of fantasy and invention. Isaac could represent the first, and August, the second. And incidentally here is another interpretation of the great west moving wave of migration that entered America. According to Hamsun it is the man overburdened with an imagination who sets sail, one bitten with a discontent for things as they are.

This novel is what Hamsun's novels have not lately been—good narrative. The two characters of Edevart and August absorb the attention of the reader; the slow, unconscious degeneration of Edevart from the naïve lyricism of his first love affair as a boy through his period of harsh, worldly sophistication is told with a mild, shrewd tenderness quite different from the mordant satire that Hamsun has unsheathed when dealing with the peasant before now. The village protected by its poverty from the outer world has a stoical serenity in which its figures move about very warm and near. "Vagabonds" is the final fruit of a matured philosophy and perfected art.

The following is a portion of a letter recently published in all London newspapers for the Sir William Watson Testimonial Fund:

"Through all the crowded, changing years since Tennyson greeted the young author of 'Wadsworth's Grave' ('Always it's verses, verse, but now at last comes a poet'), William Watson has remained loyal to the high purposes with which he set out and has splendidly fulfilled them. . . .

"And now, after seventy-two years of life—fifty-eight years of it spent in the august but materially unremunerative service of his muse—this oldest of our living poets lies ill and in poverty. . . .

"We have, accordingly, decided to inaugurate a testimonial fund in recognition of Sir William's magnificent contribution to the poetry of our time and race. Checks, etc., should be made payable to 'Sir William A. Watson Testimonial Fund account.'"

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The BOWLING GREEN

John Mistletoe, XVI.

THERE is a man from Fleet Street staying at a hotel in New York; it is his first visit to America and as he is both shrewd and sensitive he feels heavily the impact of our vast, genial but terrifying pandemonium. He is the most valuable kind of visitor we have: the trained journalist who has deliberately erased his mind of all hearsay; who makes himself clean receptiveness on which New York can write her own memoranda. He is saving all the queer little notes that New York writes him. He ordered a bottle of White Rock, for instance, and was startled to find on its neck a caveat to this effect, "This bottle is sold on the understanding that it will not be used with any alcoholic beverage." Not to embarrass him, therefore, I took mine straight. Before we left the room he was careful to wash out the tumblers; for, he remarked, "I believe in obeying the law of the land." So does New York make hypocrites of us all. He happens to be a Scot, and was as amazed as only such can be at the purposeful benzine we administer as "Scotch." He is delighted by all the minor *affiches* which are so happy a feature of American hotel civilization. The bright "Good Morning—and here is your copy of the New York *Times*. Breakfast is waiting for you in the Rosebud Lounge." A little card *Please Do Not Disturb the Occupant of This Room* warmed his philosophic cockles. He gazed out at the terrible eyries of edifice and tried to promise himself not to be disturbed. But when he found that the hotel, anticipating the mortality of trouser buttons, had forethinkingly threaded a needle for him, he was strangely touched. Now he divines in America a more than maternal tenderness.

Like a wise man he will cherish as many as possible of those little scraps of announcement that come his way. They are clues dropped in the great paperchase or treasure hunt for a nation's soul. By them one can sometimes suspect the etiquette of a strange civilization. To prove to him that the English element in America is only a small tithe of our racial amalgam I showed him this from that same day's *World*:—

> With Frank Bartos at quarterback, the racial distribution of Fordham's varsity eleven presents a perfectly balanced diagram of Irish, Poles, and Italians. On the right of the line are Elcewicz, end; Miskinis, tackle, and Wisniewski, guard; all Polish. To the left, in the same order, are Conroy, Foley, and Tracey, sons of Ireland. Between the Polish and Irish contingents stands Capt. Tony Siano, the Italian center. Directly behind him is his Polish quarterback, Bartos, and behind him another Pole, Pieculewicz, at fullback. And finally, balancing the Italian-Polish succession from center to fullback, are two Irishmen on either side, Murphy and McMahon at right and left halfback.

I myself, on visits abroad, save all *petites annonces* with great care. In London one always reads the Agony Column of the *Times* at breakfast; last summer one of the first things I discovered was this:—

> The executors of the late Professor Herbert Hall Turner announce that he left directions that his body should be dissected, or otherwise used for the general advancement of science, and that his death should not be made the occasion of any religious service or other ceremony. Professor Turner also left the following message for his friends: "I venture to hope that there may be some who will care to drink a glass to my memory, and, if so, I beg them to do so at such time and in such company as they may find convenient, and further, that they will choose their own liquor; but if anyone should desire to know my preference, then I say, 'Let it be strong ale.' And I desire these my wishes to be published in 'The Times' Newspaper as soon as possible after my death."

I am glad to report that a little group of us, in the Rainbow on Fleet Street, had the silver mugs filled and drank Professor Turner's memory standing. Godspeed to goodman in the dark. He was an astronomer, so he was not unused to it. That little notice seemed characteristic of an island of individuals. At such a moment one somehow remembers Rudyard Kipling's fine toast at a St. George's Society dinner—"My lords, ladies and gentlemen: for what there is of it—for such as it is—and for what it may be worth—will you drink to England and the English?"

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

My heart is with that good Scot while he looks at New York and tries to unify her in his clear mind. Here will he see no enemy but steam heat and rude liquor. When he remarked on Fifth Avenue in a drizzling dusk that something about it reminded him of Glasgow I was certainly surprised; but it showed that his mind was at work on private analogies of his own. Physically there would not seem to me much likeness; yet Glasgow is also a city of many disregarded prohibitions. There were some sharp counsels that our much-admired William Bolitho made for himself when he came here on his first journalizing visit and search. "To avoid allusiveness and the mixing of themes. To beware in this dangerous mission women's souls and poormen's drink. To flee the two enemies of writing, laziness and sickening industry. Not to seek smartness by hiding enthusiasm."

No one, I think, need hide his troubled passion in writing about New York. It is one of the few themes in the world that can only be approached as Melville dealt with Moby Dick. The day is ripe and overripe for such a cry of love and anger in honor of this city of ours. It will come. In due season we are always granted the artists we require, and they the emotions they need. What is said will be right without our quite knowing why.

The perfected irony of all human doings and feelings is eminent in the writing business as in all others. The beginner yearns hotly to get into print, whenever and where-ever. Yet a time may come when he yearns with equal passion to keep out of print until he has mastered the thought that bothers him. His only concern comes to be the expression of those strong intuitions that look unhandsome if uttered too green. Like poor sentimental Troilus in Chaucer, a writer has his doubts and timidities. He kneels by Cressida's bedside—Cressida representing the Muse for the purpose of our fable—and confesses his tender hopes and adorations. But grizzled Pandarus (you can symbolize him as the cynical boblisher, or just as plain human Necessity) tears off the young man's shirt and bundles him naked into bed with her. The perfect Cressida is not to be wooed in that fashion. It is hardly surprising that the first time she meets a handsome Greek she walks out on Troilus.

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

While my Scot is exploring New York, it pleases me to be thinking about the Fleet Street he has just left. Suppose I never saw Fleet Street again, what would I want to remember? To anyone interested in writing that street must always be sacred. It was first named for a drain, and much intellectual rubbish has been shot down that channel, but also it has run for centuries with much of the bravest ink in the world. Many famous churches keep an eye on it, and it is bounded at each end by the journalist's two most dangerous indulgences—liquor, and libel. I mean of course Shireff's wine cellars at the foot of Ludgate Hill, and the Law Courts in the Strand. What strange irony there was last summer in the wrapped-up memorial to a famous Newspaper Proprietor against the wall of St. Dunstan's church. The shroud, some sort of thin white sail-cloth, was swathed about the carved head and bust; it remained gruesomely so for many weeks while (so we were told) there was difficulty in finding the appropriate Celebrity who would consent to unveil it. The Unknown Journalist, irreverent pressmen called the hooded figure; Fleet Street knows too many inside and unprintable stories to be easily awed. The light wrapping twitched and fluttered strangely in evening breezes; passing there at night it seemed as though the formless shrouded face were writhing to break free, struggling to escape from its smothered sheeting and rejoin the inky life in which it had been a cæsar of caprice. Poor ghost: many a young Hamlet among reporters must have considered that restless white shape in the dim shadow of the church, straining against oblivion. It was grim and added one more sombre memory to a street where men live one day at a time, and peddle their opiate of words.

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

Fleet Street has plenty of dark rainy days; it is probably drizzling there at this moment. My present thought recalls it in a clear lustre of heat that England knows but rarely. The final cricket match with Australia was just over; afternoon papers, which had thriven on hourly extras to cry progressive details of play, now had only the weather for sensation. As the mercury climbed above 90, one poster read:

THE THERMOMETER
LATEST SCORE

And it really was grilling, for in London one makes no preparation for such warmth. When you asked the handsome bar-lady at the Rainbow please to put some ice in the gin-and-ginger, the small pellet actually was melted before the glass had reached your lips.

Now when I think of going along Fleet Street I think at once of Twining's aromatic merchandise in tea and coffee and spices. The modern newspaper began in coffee houses, and it is only right that the first thing to admire on Fleet Street is a coffee trader. And the next thing is the excellent pipe-merchant Weingott, and thereafter the god of wine himself at the Devereux or the Rainbow or the Cock or the Cheese. I pay my tribute to Messrs Hoarse the bankers and the *Manchester Guardian* office and Anderton's Hotel (where I aspire to lodge if I can ever find an empty room) and Bouverie Street famous for *Punch* and Bolt in Tun Court where there has been a booking office ever since Chaucer's time. But as much as anything I think of Corporation of London Dust Cart Number 6. It was standing opposite the new building of the *Daily Telegraph* and one of those Anzac-looking street cleaners with turned-up hat was (I think) collecting sweepings from a bin on the pavement. Or perhaps putting them into the bin; I'm not sure what the man was doing, for I was admiring the horse. He was one of those huge brown English beasts with his forelock braids neatly tied with blue ribbons, brass bosses all over his harness and the arms of the Corporation of London marked on them. How beautiful he was, strong and patient and on the job. If I had been a better journalist I should have asked about him: his name, where he stables, how long his working hours are, and where he and Dust Cart Number 6 take the jetsam of Fleet Street. I didn't ask any of these things, I was so perfectly happy admiring the animal himself, his sleeky mass, the huge barrel of his body, the warm puff from his scrolly nostrils, his strong well-polished gear—

> Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide—
> Look, what a horse should have he did not lack
> Save a proud rider on so proud a back—

and the happy touch of care in those braids and blue tapes. Was it too fanciful to see in his whole honest bearing some symbol of London itself, a nation's beast of burden, slow enduring strength and kindness and sense of order, yet sweating a little. You divine a similar virtue (and I intend no comic comparison) in some of London's magnificent policemen. See them standing, planted with feet well part, holding back a press of traffic. The white capes for gray weather, the ruddy close-shaven cheeks, the fine helmets—always I want to mate an American girl and a London bobby and start a really perfect race. A quite different notion of a great city's tragedies was suggested by a scrawny little white bitch running lost on Cannon Street, her fawn-colored nose miserably smelling trouser legs in search of some imagined god. Just opposite her were handsome boxes of purple flowers on the cornice of a building, emphasizing the gilded lion and unicorn where Messrs Colman make Mustard, Starch and Blue for the King. The Cannon Street Hotel, it occurred to me in that region, would be an amusing place to stay. Why do all visitors insist on the West End? I don't suppose any American pilgrim has ever stopped in that roomy place; how agreeable it looks, and what mysterious trains go from Cannon Street Station. And for wives there would be the pert little boutique of ELFIN, Ladies' Outfitter, on Railway Approach, Cannon Street.

But we are mixing themes, contrary to Bolitho's advice. I didn't mean to go as far as Cannon Street, but I wanted you to look at St. Paul's from behind. What is this rumor I hear about the St. Paul's pigeons being done away with? Surely they are as much a part of St. Paul's as the sea shells you can see edged in the stone of the south parapet, to remind us (as the London Perambulator has said) that the stone glories of London are stamped with the signet of the sea. What is a cathedral without pigeons? It cannot be. And across the open space behind St. Paul's comes another fine horse, a big dapple-gray pulling a lorry of Gayner's Attleboro Cyder, "the champagne of England," a slogan truer than you perhaps think. Yes, I hold that hot noontime clearly in mind: the brown horse on Fleet Street, the dapple pulling casks of sparkling Eden past Wren's great dome, and three pretty girls reading in an arbored archway in the cathedral gardens. As far as I am concerned they are there still.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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SOME RECENT FICTION

Jewish Life

THE MOTHER. By SHOLOM ASCH. New York: Horace Liveright. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by LEONARD EHRLICH

THIS translation from the Yiddish introduces to American readers the work of Sholom Asch as novelist. The New York stage some years ago saw his play, "The God of Vengeance"; because it was pitched in a brothel and hence roused the wrath of our moralistic brethren, its sincere and moving qualities were obscured by a murk of sensationalism. Here then is opportunity for a juster evaluation of Asch's work.

"The Mother" comes to us with a prodigious salute from Ludwig Lewisohn: ". . . (He is) an artist of such creative sweep, power, and grasp as to link his name unquestionably with the most eminent names of our period." More exactly, Mr. Lewisohn does not hesitate to link Asch's name with Knut Hamsun. All of which seems to us quite unfortunate, and much like taking "many chaws at a cherry." Hamsun is among our giants; this work reveals at best —at its frequent low levels it is almost incredibly mawkish and laborious—an honest, vital talent, but decidedly a minor one. It is authentic; those of us who have knowledge of the bitter and strangely beautiful Jewish life of the Old World and American ghetto both, will recognize this. But it is genuineness of narrow limits, its reach is rarely beyond racial idiosyncrasy. Perhaps the projected translation of Asch's trilogy, "St. Petersburg," "Warsaw," and "Moscow," will reveal the universal and permanent attributes of which Lewisohn speaks.

The material here is thrice familiar—the transference of Jewish peasants to an alien land, the spiritual readjustments, the heartbreak of the deracinated elders, the sweatshop experience for the young and the inevitable social revolt consequent upon it. It is an epic theme which has been drained of its marrow through constantly recurring occupation with identical elements. Unquestionably it has abiding and inherent significance. The possibilities for its artistic exploitation are infinite. Why then must we have a score of lesser "David Levinsky's"?

There is now a Jewish Book-of-the-Month Club. This is its first selection.

The Byways of Vice

RIDE THE NIGHTMARE. By WARD GREENE. New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith. 1930. $2.

IT is to be feared that this book will be one of those houses of Liberty's friends in which Liberty is wounded. It has the jocose vulgarity, the anarchism expressed by the characters, and the excess of sexual looseness in the incidents, that are frequently praised, in the many recent books in which they occur, as so many blows struck at the forces of repression; but a book like "Ride the Nightmare" could do more to reconcile readers to a censorship than fifty books advocating it. So long as the attack upon certain books can be based only on their possible danger to the possible souls of citizens, the right of the state to interfere is debatable. There is an obvious physical danger, however, from that infectious form of insanity that has been responsible for at least one celebrated murder and for shamefully many lynchings, and in suppressing incitements to it the state is clearly within its rights. Hence sincere libertarians, who wish to keep the powers of the government as closely curtailed as possible, must regret that Mr. Greene has gone so far toward raising this issue.

"Ride the Nightmare" deals with sadism, not in the insinuating, feline manner of Parisian pornography, which is only repellent or ludicrous to the healthy mind, but in a vein of Rabelaisian heartiness. The hero is called by his creator "pantagruelian," and the whole implication of the style seems to be that excesses, whether of the vine or the rod, are equally mere Falstaffian fun. The complete absence of moral judgment is so amazing that it is a positive relief when the hero meets Bellerophon Cawdor, an erudite ogre of the old-fashioned kind, and one finds oneself among the familiar papier-maché Satanists of the *fin-de-siècle*. Cawdor, with his stores of learning about Limoges china and Rosicrucianism, and his knives and chains, is only a demon out of the Victorian decadence, quite as old-fashioned and absurd as one out of the Gothic revival; but without him the book might have a dangerous force.

This is, of course, not to say that man may not look at anything God has made. The world needs understanding of every type of mind, and the intuition of the artist is often of the greatest value in explaining the unknown types. But one does not feel that Mr. Greene has himself understood his hero. The explanation he offers of Jake's aberrancies is that he was tormented by the desire to be different from his fellowmen at all costs. Undoubtedly, when the example is at hand, vanity has led some experimenters to take their first steps in the byways of vice; but vanity would hardly suggest the idea with no help from either instinct or reading. Yet in the opening episode Jake, a raw country boy, has already started on his peculiar choice of gratification. On the other hand, the book will not serve as a study of the truly deformed mind; Jake has not one of the struggles which one would expect, and which one finds, for example, in "The Well of Loneliness." One of his friends says of him, "It's my private opinion he doesn't enjoy his little charades with rods and chains and crucifixes and so forth as much as he pretends to. But these tales get about, you see, distinguishing one from one's fellow." Which brings us to the other unacceptable explanation again. No matter how one regards him, Jake remains uncomprehended, and the author's reason for writing about him correspondingly obscure.

Lincoln's Last Months

THE LAST FULL MEASURE. By HONORÉ W. MORROW. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

IN this story of Lincoln's last six months in the White House, Mrs. Morrow achieves something more than a successful piece of fiction and an effective conclusion to her well-planned trilogy of the Civil War. Though by strict definition it must be called fiction, for it is full of inverted dialogue and incident, it comes very close to the line of history. Nowhere else will the reader find so full and authentic a story of the plot of John Wilkes Booth against Lincoln's life, and of the part played in it by George Atzerodt, David Herold, Mrs. Suratt, and Lewis Payne. Mrs. Morrow, as in her two previous volumes, has saturated herself in the printed materials bearing upon Lincoln's last days and the machinations of the conspirators leading up to the assassination in Ford's Theatre. Much more than in her two previous volumes, she has clung closely to the actual facts, using no fictitious characters and supplying very few fictitious situations. The result is a fine, sweeping account of Lincoln's last days, of the peril that in the background is steadily drawing nearer to him, and of the final catastrophe.

Yet the best feature of the book—the best feature of the whole trilogy—is simply the portrait of Lincoln. Its very simplicity helps to give it reality. In this volume the kindly, shrewd, humorous, harassed statesman is shown as history fairly agrees he actually was in the last months of the war—far more sure of himself than at the beginning, far more serene as to the future of the nation, very tired and troubled, and more philosophical in spirit. If now and then Mrs. Morrow puts a touch of sentimentalism into the picture, it is only what the popular legend of Lincoln requires. His inward ruminations, his household life, and his relations with his public associates, are all carefully and ably done. Writing fiction instead of history, Mrs. Morrow is in a position to include many homely incidents, to show Lincoln in his relaxed moods, and to present him with those friends whom he most liked. Among these friends are Hill Lamon, Senator Harlan of Iowa, and Sumner; and a little love affair between Mary Harlan and Robert Lincoln runs through the book. The sketch of Stanton is adroitly executed, and furnishes an opportunity to show Lincoln's loyalty, his magnanimity, and his lack of petty vanity. The mercurial Secretary of War had his insolent and arrogant moments, but Lincoln knew how to manage him.

The novel suffers, as a novel, from the constant mechanical switching of the scene from Lincoln's circle to John Wilkes Booth's and back again; it may suffer also, according to some tastes, from the fact that it is nine tenths history and only one tenth fiction. To other tastes it will be all the better for this proportioning of the ingredients. Most historical novels furnish their factual information in slender amounts and in dubious quality; but readers of "The Last Full Measure" may feel assured that they are reading an authentic and generously detailed record of actual men and actual events.

The Slums of Berlin

A ROOM IN BERLIN. By GÜNTHER BIRKENFELD. Liveright. 1930. $2.

THIS story of a post-war, proletarian family in the slums of Berlin is dreadful enough, but its tragedy would be deeper did there not hang about it the notion that the author is inclined to weep into his beer.

Here you have the *milieu* which the inimitable Zille puts into his cartoons, but instead of the broad and beery humor of that historian of the Berlin proletariat, you have something close to that nightmare point of view which the cartoonists of *Simplicissimus* were accustomed to put into their hideously self-pitying sketches during the worst of the years immediately after the war.

Things like this may well have happened. Brothers and sisters, herded day and night in the same room; out of work, half starved, cut off from all the normal pleasures and excitements of youth, immersed in that common hopelessness which hung like a black fog over more than one European capital after the war, may have been driven to prostitution, incest, suicide, to any or all of the lengths pictured in this story.

These things could happen, and Herr Birkenfeld is artist enough to make them happen quietly, without any shrieking, with a very real feeling for atmosphere and character, and to immerse them in a certain beauty. His is deft and to a certain extent persuasive work. It fails of full persuasion, it seems to us, in that one can't escape the notion that the author is a little too intrigued with his idea of the hideousness that might be compressed in, and partly produced by, his one tenement-house room; that it is with the room, perhaps, rather than with life that he started, and that given that plan and initial direction, its wretched occupants had to be carried to the direst extremities, whether or no.

It isn't fair, of course, to measure a novelist's truth by the truth of everyday, objective life. An artist makes his own truth, or is free to do so. One questions, nevertheless, whether a young man as quick-witted as Paul, in the story, and strong and active enough to make a fair success as a lightweight prize-fighter, would, without drink or dope, have sunk to such abject, helpless, and hopeless lengths as young Schwarzer did. Wouldn't he have kept his head above water, somehow or other, even in the bog of post-war Berlin? It seems to put a bit too great a strain on the sinister influences of that tenement room. In short, one has the notion that Birkenfeld's novel isn't so much life as the proletariat lives and sees it, as it is the proletariat as seen through the slightly sickly imagination of a writing person determined to make his readers shiver, and, if possible, weep.

Russia of the Past

THE FLAMES OF MOSCOW. By IVAN LUKASH. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1930. $2.50.

LUKASH'S novel takes the reader back to the Russia of the beginning of the nineteenth century—to the assassination of Emperor Paul I, the reign of Alexander I, Napoleon's invasion, the "Scythian campaign"—*i.e.* retreat into the depths of their vast country—of the Russian army, and the burning of Moscow. Alexander's initial plans of social reform, the revolutionary notions which many of the younger officers brought back to the East after their campaigns in the West, the reactionary measures which followed from the throne, are all part of a period with which most American readers are little acquainted, and in so far as the novel brings those first two decades of the last century to life, it has interest. As fiction, however, it is somewhat lacking in those mordant qualities which cause so many Russian stories to hold their readers, whether the latter are familiar with the stuff of the story or not.

The Story of Edith

RINGS ON HER FINGERS. By RHYS DAVIES. New York: Harcourt, Brace. 1930. $2.

THIS book has much in common with the school of super-naturalistic novels that appeared in this country nine or ten years ago. They were marked by the choice of an ugly and cruel setting, which was presented with a careful and detailed vividness, and by a strong interest in the physical manifestation of sex. Similarly "Rings on Her Fingers" is laid in South Wales, a region where (according to Mr. Davies) the countryside is made up of slate and slag from the mines, and the towns are ridden by a dingy genteelness and a drab Puritanism. In this sterile desolation, the thoughts of Mr. Davies's characters are as much concerned with generation as those of some of our portrayers of small towns; for example, take the heroine's reflections about her husband:

> She felt he was one of those men who seem never to free themselves of the umbilical cord, who feel themselves shadows when they are not attached in a kind of spiritual blood-flow with a woman. Perhaps she was wrong, perhaps in that prim and trim small body of hers there was waiting for her, like a sheathed sword, a devastating maleness.

If there is, he has never showed any sign of it, and he never does do so; he is always designedly weak-kneed, the very last person to suggest a devastating maleness; but to Edith, as to every one else in the book, sexual passion is apparently so great an absession that she must speculate on it in the most unlikely places.

Edith is the chief character. She is the eldest of the children of an ineffective schoolmaster and his shrewish wife, and her childhood is passed in the quarrelsome squalor of the worst sort of shabby-genteel household. When she is wooed by a young linen-draper, rich as her mining valley conceives riches, and by a socialistic collier, her long acquaintance with poverty makes her refuse the collier, whom she desires, and take the other. The book is the story of her marriage. The story is unsatisfactory, because the woman, on whom everything depends, is not large enough by nature to support the length of a book. Her life has nothing in it but a futile attempt to eat her cake and have it; and she has none of the cleverness and determination that might make this interesting, nothing but the desire for pleasure, chiefly physical. At the end of the book, indeed, she does voice a certain philosophy, arising perhaps from her wish that the miner had carried her off: she asserts that what women most desire is to be mastered, and that there is at present a hostility between the sexes because men have given women too much freedom. But it is impossible to determine whether this is Mr. Davies's own view, which the book was written to illustrate, or is meant to be taken only as Edith's view, like her designedly silly ideas about socialism.

The reader can fairly ask for more than he has been given in the story of three incomplete amorists of which the end concludes nothing; yet in the setting and style he has been given a great deal. The narrow Welsh valley is drawn with a pitiless and compelling force. And the writing has an unusual quality. Although the attempt to escape the ordinary is perhaps too evident, it has an obvious visual clarity and a vigor that are worthy of more important types than Mr. Davies has drawn.

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The Lookout

FIVE words that hushed a theater—and traveled from coast to coast:

Perhaps you heard them spoken, over two decades ago, these words that gave the title to a play everybody discussed:

MARY: What are you? . . .

MANSON: I am . . . (the great bell tolls the Sanctus) . . . I am *the servant in this house.* I have my work to do. Would you like to help me?

And "The Servant in the House," with its ancient message of the healing power of love, turned the thoughts of everyone to the Golden Rule, and brought fame to its author, Charles Rann Kennedy. You may read it anew in the collected edition of his works, "Plays for Seven Players," presented in attractive typography by the University of Chicago Press, at $5. Always a conservative, Mr. Kennedy remarks, with apparent satisfaction, that some of the issues raised in these plays are more acceptable now than when they were written, between 1906 and 1919. "The Winterfeast," "The Idol-Breaker," "The Rib of the Man," "The Army with Banners," "The Fool from the Hills," "The Terrible Meek" and "The Necessary Evil" are the plays in which Mr. Kennedy helped build the American theater of ideas.

"MORALLY careless rather than deliberately criminal" . . . this is the verdict of the newest research on Gen. John C. Fremont, whose career belongs to the mysteries of human conduct. Cardinal Goodwin, professor of American history at Mills College, reaches this conclusion in a new study of documents and writings called "John Charles Fremont: an Explanation of his Career." His book is the analysis of a drifter—a man who loved to wander over vast, unexplored areas with congenial companions, rather than one who was a forceful, energetic, powerful leader. No man is wholly emancipated from his times; Fremont was, in the opinion of this writer, the victim of his age. To prove this theory Prof. Goodwin has avoided partisanship and drawn on much new material. (Stanford University Press, $4.)

Once historians, like Fourth of July orators, made the eagle scream. Today historians make no compromise with the emotions—they tell what the record reveals.

THAT is why "The Growth of the American Republic," which Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager have just completed, is a book for the true patriot, who foregoes the cheering in order to get an accurate understanding of his nation's affairs. The United States cannot be considered in isolation, as the center of the universe. Throughout its history it has been influenced by the movements of peoples in other lands, and often its own policies have influenced nations far overseas. Yet Prof. Morison is able to call its growth "the most amazing drama in modern history." "The Growth of the American Republic" is a running account of our history, with terse estimates of its great leaders from Washington to Woodrow Wilson, taking into account internal and external policies, the influence of economic conditions on its expansion and the importance of social and racial forces in its development. The iconoclastic historian, who pulled down popular idols, passes; he is succeeded by the historian who weighs men and events without bias. This book of nearly 1,000 pages contains a detailed reading guide on every phase of American life. The Oxford University Press is publishing this book at $6.

EVEN Italy, the land with "a burning desire of life," swings toward classical models in its newer literature. In America humanism; in Italy classicism point the way. There futurism ran its course before the war; materialism and disillusion followed; today comes a wish for order and harmony, and action. Dr. Domenico Vittorini, professor of Italian at the University of Pennsylvania, has described this cycle for the American reader in his new book, "The Modern Italian Novel." (University of Pennsylvania Press, $3.) He traces the growth of the novel from the days of Manzoni and Giovanni Verga through to D'Annunzio, Pirandello, Croce, Papini, Borgese and Italo Svevo, and the younger intellectuals. This book is for the general reader who seeks wider literary horizons.

DOES smoking help or hinder your activities? Does it reduce your waist-line, or enlarge it? Does it make you a hail-fellow-well-met in your club, or a nuisance around the house? Perhaps these and similar questions have perplexed you as they did the students of Harvard University when Dr. Walter L. Mendenhall, professor of pharmacology in Boston University, first broached the subject. Dr. Mendenhall has literally packed a score of useful and sane observations on smoking into the little book he calls "Tobacco," discussing whether expectant mothers should smoke, whether tobacco stimulates or retards, and to what we really owe the evils and the enjoyment of the weed that has cast its spell over men from Sir Walter Raleigh to Sir James M. Barrie. This is one of the Harvard Health Talks, put into a booklet by the Harvard University Press at $1.

AS for the poets of yesteryear—where are they, and why do they fade? There was Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney, so popular ninety years ago that not to know her was to be ignorant of literature. True, Edgar A. Poe once damned her as "the American Hemans," but later sought her poetry for Graham's Magazine. Gordon S. Haight, who has found the key to the mystery of her extraordinary reputation, describes her as a singer of graveyard verse, dwelling on death and piety and the sublime when she was not describing the Deluge in these terms:

And slowly as its axle turn'd
The wat'ry planet moved and mourn'd.

Mr. Haight has revealed her story in "Mrs. Sigourney: the Sweet Singer of Hartford" (Yale University Press, $3), and thus introduced us anew to a period in which Poe, Rufus Griswold, Horace Greeley, N. P. Willis, Longfellow were familiars on the American Parnassus. A letter from Poe, reproduced in facsimile, throws light on his editorial days.

L. O.

Books of Special Interest

A Study of Italian Art

SIENESE PAINTING OF THE TRECENTO. By CURT H. WEIGELT. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. (Paris: Pegasus Press.) 1930. $42.

Reviewed by G. H. EDGELL
Harvard University

THE task of a reviewer is not always a grateful one. He is expected to criticize, and his criticism is too apt to be opprobrious. Indeed, he often picks up a book and runs through it with the chief idea of finding misstatements, or at least statements which he can dispute. In so doing he loses sight of his more important duty: that of stating the general character of his subject, with some estimate of its completeness, readability, and authority. Let us say at the outset, therefore, that Doctor Weigelt's book is an unusually satisfactory piece of work. It is well written and to the point. Useless descriptions of subjects, wordiness, "padding" of all sorts have been eliminated. Controversial points are discussed incisively and the material reduced by copious notes with specific references to articles. Above all, the author shows himself up to date in the literature of his subject. Whether or not the reader agrees with his conclusions on individual points, the author constantly proves that he is familiar with the opinions and arguments of other scholars, ancient or published within the year, and regardless of the language or type of publication in which they appeared. The book is a serious, readable synthesis by one of the very few great experts on the subject.

As one might expect in a book on the trecento, the lion's share of both text and illustrations go to an analysis of the styles of Duccio, Simone Martini, and the brothers Lorenzetti. It is fair to question, however, the size of this proportion. If we except Barna, whom the author tends to date unusually early, only two of the fifty pages of text are devoted to painters who worked subsequent to 1348. The same general proportion holds for the allotment of plates. Such an attitude can be defended. The greater Sienese were much more important than the lesser, but there is a danger in overemphasizing them. Too long the general public has had the idea that there was no Sienese painting after the Lorenzetti. Modern scholarship has busied itself with the resuscitation of forgotten minor artists and the disentanglement of minor personalities. It is a pity, therefore, in the most up-to-date book, to curtail so radically the discussion of them. Some that are beginning to be fairly well known and represented not only in public galleries but in private collections, are missing entirely. There is no mention, for example, of Ceccarelli, of Giacomo di Mino, of Gregorio di Cecco, of Niccolò di Segna, of Francesco di Vannuccio. The minor artists that are most emphasized are the Ducciesques. One resents a little the space devoted to the Master of the Città di Castello Madonna or him of the panel at Badia a Isola, when so imaginative an artist as Barna is given a cavalier treatment and none of his works outside the Collegiata at San Gemignano is reproduced.

It is fair, therefore, to say that the author stresses the early school. This is natural in view of the importance and the highly controversial character of the problems of Guido da Siena and of the Madonna Rucellai. Perhaps the most intriguing point to the expert is the author's alignment in the first of these problems. Since his book on Duccio, he has always been regarded as one of the staunchest and most scholarly adherents of the belief that Guido's famous Madonna in the Palazzo Pubblico was painted in 1221. The author now abandons this belief and dates the painting from the middle of the dugento. This was foreshadowed in an article in *Art Studies* in 1928. The later arguments, however, hardly seem as convincing as the earlier. The whole problem of the Sienese dugento is shadowy and difficult. Many believe that a Sienese school, in the sense of a school with Sienese characterestics, did not exist before Duccio. The author's statement that already in the thirteenth century we can clearly recognize the characteristics which we call Sienese, is certainly open to challenge.

It is interesting to note how the author stands in some of the most mooted questions with regard to Sienese painting. The much discussed Madonna Rucellai he gives to Duccio, thereby reiterating his oft promulgated opinion. The weight of present authority is probably slightly against this attribution, but the reviewer confesses his agreement. It is not so easy to accept as by Duccio the fine Madonna from Santa Cecilia in Crevole, now in the Opera del Duomo at Siena. Doctor Weigelt's list of Duccio is generous, and this is gratifying, as no other scholar has ever made so intensive a study of the subject. Some lists are obviously too restricted. The late Dr. de Nicola would have had us accept as authentic only three Madonnas in addition to the Majestas: the small Madonna of the Franciscans in the Siena Gallery, the large ruined polyptych in the same gallery, and the exquisite Madonna from Santa Maria dei Servi at Montepulciano, now in the Uffizi Gallery. Doctor Weigelt's list includes these and a judicious selection of others that most critics will accept.

The much discussed Madonna of the Gualino Collection at Turin he calls Florentine. This seems most probable. He makes a plausible group of paintings by the Master of the Madonna at Badia a Isola, and another and larger one of the works of the Master of the Madonna of Città di Castello. This helps to bring order out of chaos, though other critics will dispute in detail.

In some other questions the author has shown a more easy-going acceptance of previous opinion. For example, he attributes to Lippo Memmi the lateral wings of the Sant 'Ansano Annunciation in the Uffizi, giving Simone the central panel. This is obvious, but is it not too obvious? It is extremely doubtful if a careful scrutiny of color, craftsmanship, and morphological detail would justify such a distinction. A docta ignorantia is ignominious but safer in this case. Another ancient attribution, oft challenged in modern times, is that of the Triptych in the left transept of the lower church of San Francesco at Assisi. For years this has been conventionally given to Pietro Lorenzetti, and many able critics still hold this opinion. Nevertheless, it has often been attacked, and it is at least noticeable that the author accepts it without question. Similarly, he accepts as by Pietro the Polyptych of the Beata Umiltà in the Uffizi. He is probably right, but it is strange that an author so familiar with the most up-to-date opinion did not at least mention Dewald's atatck upon the attribution.

Doctor Weigelt devotes some time to a discussion of Berenson's restored personality, "Ugolino Lorenzetti." He also outlines Dewald's arguments in favor of the "Ovile Master." One could wish that he had come out squarely with an opinion as to whether the two were one and the same. It is an extremely difficult and highly controversial point. Perhaps the compiler of a synthesis is justified in dodging it. On the other hand, granted the restraint, it is not so easy to understand the author's acceptance of Rowley's revolutionary theories about Ambrogio Lorenzetti. It is quite possible that Doctor Weigelt came to these conclusions independently and before reading Rowley's article. More than that, it is quite possible that he and Rowley are correct, and that a follower and not Ambrogio did the frescoes of the Chapel of San Galgano at Monte Siepi, the exquisite Santa Petronilla altarpiece of Siena Gallery, and the Madonna of the Platt Collection at Englewood, New Jersey. If so, however, we should like to have a more careful analysis. At least the author might have pointed out the importance of the distinction. The public will be left with the impression that these important paintings are removed from Ambrogio's list because they are unworthy of the master. They may be removed because they are different, but it should be pointed out that such a modification of Ambrogio's list is somewhat like eliminating from Shakepeare's works "Hamlet," "Othello," and the "Merchant of Venice." Their segregation postulates an unknown artistic personality practically as important as Ambrogio's.

We seem to have abandoned ourselves to the reviewer's favorite sport of criticizing detail. However we may disagree in detail, we should not lose sight of the value of the book as a whole. It is a pleasure to read a work which is so convincing in authority, so free from the superfluous, so honest in attacking controversial points, and so well-bred in the avoidance of polemic.

The law library of Columbia University has acquired 4,250 volumes, comprising the collection of Karl Otto Johannes Theresius von Richthofen, a teacher of law in the University of Berlin, who died in 1888. Approximately 1,200 volumes in this collection are legal, and the rest are historical source material. They include rare works in old Frisian law and in early Dutch and German legal history, in which Von Richthofen was an authority.

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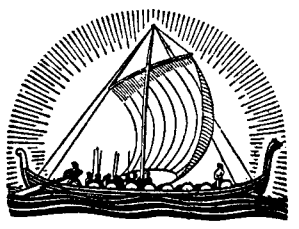
THE number of books which The Viking Press each year presents to the public is deliberately limited. We present below a select list of titles, each distinguished in its own field. Two books, *Success* and *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer,* are the November selections of the Literary Guild and the Book-of-the-Month Club. *Swift* is already one of the best reviewed books of the year; and the *Short Stories of Saki* combines all his enduringly popular stories between the covers of one volume. From the books on this page you are sure to find titles to appeal to and satisfy your individual taste.



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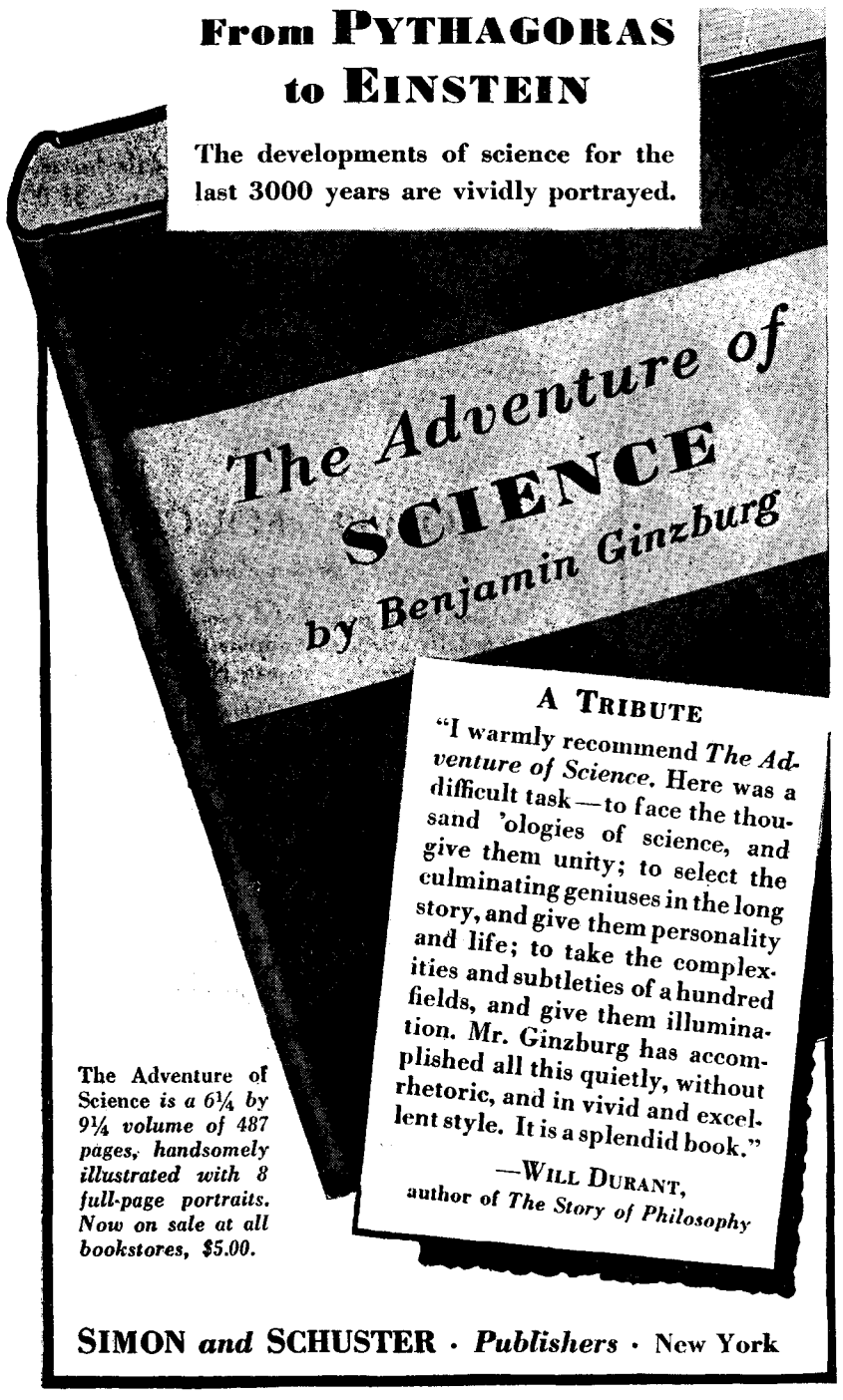

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Round about Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE most important book before us this week is naturally "Lyric America," edited by Alfred Kreymborg, author of "Our Singing Strength," to which it is a companion volume. Mr. Kreymborg has covered three hundred years in this anthology, and he has produced a solidly inclusive work, with a suggestion at the end of it for a selective library of American poetry of two hundred single volumes, as well as the proper indices. He dedicates "Lyric America" to his brother poets. He says in his preface that he has tried to make the present compilation complete in itself, and it may indeed be so considered. Stedman's former anthology ran from 1787 to 1900. It was time that a later collection be made. Edwin Markham's two huge volumes of "The Book of Poetry" includes the British poets as well as the American. Stedman, as Mr. Kreymborg notes, while he also did a British anthology and his American one was a quite separate affair, achieved notable breadth of interest in the latter. "With decided esthetic reservations," the present editor says,

> I prefer Stedman's eclectic method, at his or even our young day in poetic history, to a method restricting editorial industry to a single critical standard. The single standard is the one to apply among lands old and deep-rooted in poetry: China, India, Greece, Italy, France, England. Time has matured among them and limned the living perspectives.

His preface is also a presentation of an attitude opposed to any "static finality." It is a sincere and modest preface.

Kreymborg is first of all a poet himself, caring more for an art that supplies its own inherent standards of criticism than for the vain striving that would attempt to set up final standards. What he says is essential common sense in dealing with such a protean art as that of poetry. And no one who has attempted to cover the work of three centuries in one art in one country alone can realize the extreme difficulties besetting compilation. In this volume he has also endeavored to correct omissions he has felt in his former work. Criticism of "Lyric America" therefore reduces itself to difference of opinion concerning specific selections, for as to the poets themselves it is difficult to see how a more inclusive representation could have been made in one volume.

Despite Anne Bradstreet and Freneau our Colonial and Revolutionary period was so barren of true poetry that Mr. Kreymborg's selections in Part One seem well chosen in their differences of subject presented to show the background of the time and to illustrate its interest and influence, rather than to claim any high poetic merit for this or that particular selection. At the end of it come Drake and Halleck, though Drake's birth actually post-dated Bryant's, who begins the second section. Yet this, too, seems a proper arrangement in perspective. Actually, and it is not Mr. Kreymborg's fault but the fault of the period, the first four lines of Halleck's tribute to Drake outweigh as poetry all else in this section.

We could have spared Bryant's "O Fairest of the Rural Maids," since in Section Two he is given half a dozen selections in all. We could also spare Maria Gowen Brooks's ecstasy of "high-wrought feeling," even though both attitudes *toward* and *of* maiden immaculacy are characteristic of the dawn of the nineteenth century. But we thank the editor for recovering Percival's "The Coral Grove," and we are glad Old Grimes is here again, who "wore large buckles on his shoes, And changed them every day." We expected Pinkney's "A Health," of course, and thought Simms's "The Grape-Vine Swing" probable. Willis is next with a characteristic piece. Our first real regret is that more was not retrieved from Thomas Holley Chivers's "Eonchs of Ruby," something about those "Cydonian suckets." And Aldous Huxley would by no means approve the inclusion of Poe's "Ulalume," which is actually one of the great nonsense poems of the English language. Without defining the *type* of inspiration that produced

That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal pole

we find such expressions as superb, though perhaps not quite as moving, as Lear's masterpiece which sighs softly,

Far and few, far and few
Are the lands where the Jumblies live.
Their heads are green and their hands are blue
And they went to sea in a sieve,

a poem that has always engendered in us a positively divine wistfulness. We should have cut Poe to "To Helen," "Israfel," "The City in the Sea," and "The Conqueror Worm," all splendid things; and should have included "The Haunted Palace," which is in the same class. It is of historical interest, however, to find Sarah Helen Whitman's sonnet to Poe next in order. Ellen Hooper furnishes a tribute to Emerson after a series of selections at which we cannot cavil.

Mr. Kreymborg courageously confronts us with "The Day Is Done" and "The Arrow and the Song" from Longfellow, before giving us some of this poet's best sonnets and good shorter narratives. Yet, after all, such were the songs that sang themselves into every American home, and they represent the qualities that made Longfellow popular. If we cannot read "The Day Is Done" without hearing the accents of the Norsk Nightingale in convulsing Scandinavian parody, that's our affair. Of the "Hymn to the Night," also here, we have always held a far higher opinion. There is nothing wrong with such lines as

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,
From those deep cisterns flows.

And the final verse is genuinely beautiful.

Whittier was, of course, better; and thus he shows here; though why nothing of "Snowbound"? Holmes is well represented in his variety, and following him are Very, Cranch, Thoreau, and Channing,—and properly. We ourselves should not have given Lowell's "Commemoration Ode" in full with nothing from the "Biglow Papers," in which he was a genuine pioneer. Melville was, of course, more of a poet in his prose than in his poetry, but needs must be represented. We are glad of Thomas William Parsons's one distinguished poem, and Whitman has his proper allotment to end Part Two.

Stephen Collins Foster's "My Old Kentucky Home" and James Ryder Randall's "My Maryland" are most significant of the South in Part Three. We would have done somewhat differently by Sidney Lanier, but he is properly appreciated. Irwin Russell, Alice and Phoebe Cary, Howells, Hay, Harte, and Miller, with Bierce and Maurice Thompson and Field all properly belong. But we have overrun our space and can only add that, before Markham ushers in our modern poets, the lighter and more humorous aspects of nineteenth century American poetry are not slighted by Mr. Kreymborg, and, of course, Emily Dickinson is given her proper span of pages. Beginning with Part Five, the poets will be familiar to most followers of our national verse from 1900 onward. As this area has already been a good deal anthologized, Mr. Kreymborg is to be congratulated on having strictly exercised a balanced personal judgment, even though we do not always agree, and he has done his work among the most modern with a decided idiosyncrasy of his own applied to an extremely comprehensive knowledge of what is being written.

The first definitive trade edition of the Collected Poems of Robert Frost has now been put on the market by Henry Holt in a volume that is an excellent example of bookmaking. There is no need to say anything further. Frost's position in American letters is already established in a high place.

We should touch on a few minor volumes before us. Constance Ferris's "Curtain Calls" (Harr Wagner: San Francisco) is presented in the manner of Masters's "Spoon River Anthology," and the portraits do not remain with us very long. Edith Anne Stewart Robertson's "He Is Become My Song" (Macmillan) is a reverent interpretation of the story of Christ in verse. It may be read for historical interest, but we should most strongly advise you rather to return to last year's fierily inspired "Firehead" (Brewer & Warren), by Lola Ridge, a work of genius on the chief New Testament characters. "Bloodroot and Other Poems," by Elizabeth S. Royce (The Morrill Press, Fulton, N. Y.), has some felicities among its brevities, but a good deal of it is very like the general run.

Thomas Norton Longman, for many years head of the publishing house of Longmans, Green & Co., died recently in Kings Langley, Hertfordshire, at the age of 81. He had retired some time ago.

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A Letter From Italy

By Samuel Putman

THERE is a new figure in the Italian literary landscape, and one that seems not unlikely to shift the perspective somewhat,—shift it from Milan and Florence and Rome, in the direction of Genoa, a city that has not been looked upon as particularly literary in the past. When, early in the present year, Gino Saviotti founded his organ, *L'Indice*, at Genoa, things began to look up along the Riviera; and by this time, Saviotti's influence is one to be reckoned with throughout the peninsula, while it may safely be predicted that it is one that will grow rather than diminish in importance.

Known as a contributor to various journals and reviews, such as the old *Fiera Letteraria*, *Il Convegno*, etc., Saviotti, some while back, became convinced that there was something rotten in the state of Italian letters. No sickly-hued Hamlet himself, he discovered that the national literature was suffering from the pale cast of thought—he termed it *"cerebralismo"*—and set out to right matters. He first put down his reflections on the subject in a fourteen page pamphlet, which he has published, entitled a "Panorama of Present-Day Literature, Art and Criticism"; and this statement, together with those to be found in the opening numbers of *L'Indice*, he has made to serve him as a platform. That platform begins:

> The prevailing characteristic of present-day art is—as always in those eras that are poor in fancy and rich in thought—cerebralism. Painters, sculptors, poets, novel-writers, more conscious than formerly of the demands of art, in touch with all that is being done abroad, prone to grasp at every breeze that seems to hold out some hope of clearing the atmosphere, wavering between the old and the new, are inclined to talk more than they work, and instead of painting or sculpturing or making verses, they proceed to manufacture theories, or rather polemics, out of colors, stones, and meters. Surrendering thus to the natural trend of their temperaments, they go about seeking anything that appears new and original, forgetful of the fact that real originality consists in the production of real art.
>
> This conceptualism, along with a mania for the new, is characteristic of all periods of decadence. . . . The sign by which we may recognize all this is the dominance of formal skill over content: the pompous garment covering the wretchedness of a consumptive body. Mankind, humanity is lacking. All brain and no heart.

This may be said to be Saviotti's text, which he goes on to elaborate. He is not a pessimist. He believes that a renovation is not only indispensable, but imminent.

So much for the prognostic. Saviotti goes on to give an analysis of Italian literature, past and present, and to extend his theory to the theater and the plastic arts, as well as to poetry; he also criticizes the critics, and has something to say about *"filosofismo."* What he announces, in the end, is a Return to Tradition, which does not appear to be vastly different from the "Return to Order" of a Cocteau, or of Saviotti's own countryman, Ardengo Soffici (cf. the latter's *"Richiamo all' Ordine,"* 1929). There is to be neither a neo-classicism, nor a neo-romanticism, nor a *neoverismo* (new psychologic realism). The best that they have to offer is to be taken from the classics, from Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Petrarch, from the Italian romanticists, Manzoni, Leopardi, and others, and from such *veristi* as Goldoni and Verga.

But basically, what does all this mean? It means bringing art back to art, attaining once more the eternal founts of creation; in short, reaffirming the great truth, so simple that it sounds like a jest, that, to produce art, artists are necessary.

Turning to his brother critics, of that typically Italian institution, the "third page," Saviotti finds that the latter are untrue to their task of assaying the work of art and guiding the young writer. They are too interested in writing a "fine article," one that will look well in a collected volume; their criticism is too impressionistic.

These are the lines along which the new organ is being conducted. Saviotti, as editor and critic, has a certain straight-thinking, hard-hitting, almost Mencken-like quality. He stands, in a manner, for a certain man-in-the-street horse-sense in things esthetic. Appearing in the Italy of the moment, he hardly could help being something of a phenomenon.

Signor Saviotti is a very close friend of the Sage of Rapallo, our own Ezra Pound, who, of course, is in the Genoese sector. Pound is a contributor to *L'Indice*; and in fact, the new journal has a little of a Poundian-American air. One picks up the September number (the publication appears on the fourteenth of each month) and finds an article by Ezra, giving his "reminiscenses" of Joyce, an article on Antheil's "Trans-Atlantic," etc.

Saviotti, in the stand he has taken, is not alone in his significance. Particularly in his reaction against an over-stress on form, in the direction of a return to a *contenutismo*, or new stress on content, he is merely part of a leaven that is, at the moment, beginning to ferment all over Europe.

LA REVOLUTION FRANÇAISE. Volume XIII of the Histoire Générale. By G. Lefebvre, R. Guyor, and Sagnac. Paris: Alcan. 1930.

THE authors of this volume have been particularly careful and successful in tracing the causes of the French Revolution, political, economic, social, and ideologic, to their origins in England and in America, as well as in France. They have connected the course of the events, from 1789 to 1799, with the state of the minds in both continents. They have brought out vividly the specific character of the upheaval which carried democracy beyond English aristocratic and American oligarchic liberalism on to political and social equality. The scholarly accuracy and thoroughness of the book form a solid basis for the arresting and illuminating presentation of the greatest historical drama in the world since the advent of Christianity.

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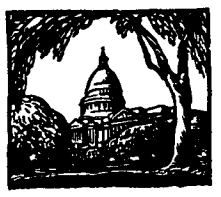

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Art

MICHELANGELO. Master Draughtsmen No. 1. Introduction by A. E. POPHAM. Rudge. 1930. $2.25.

So far as the thing can be done in twelve plates Michelangelo's habits as a draughtsman are sufficiently represented in this album. The format is a large in quarto. The reproductions are collotypes tipped to the page and each faced with an interpretative note. It is a creditable example of good English plate-making and book-making. The emphasis is on Michelangelo's early years. The appeal is frankly to the art lover without scholarly pretensions. To him or her the book, very reasonable in price considering the quality of the work, can confidently be recommended. One hesitates to note the slip in the preface by which St. Paul is made to suffer crucifixion, St. Peter being plainly meant.

THE CHILDHOOD OF ART, or THE ASCENT OF MAN. By HERBERT GREEN SPEARING. Henry Holt. 1930. $10.

This is a reprint of a valuable book, first published eighteen years ago, which has made its place as perhaps the best manual of the subject. There is no change in the body of the text, but a preface of thirty-six pages brings the survey up to date, while the notes have been considerably amplified and include new illustrations. The book is not too difficult for the beginner, while for its general good judgment and breadth of view the specialist may dip into it with profit.

VENICE AND ITS ART. By H. H. POWERS. Macmillan. 1930. $5.

About a third of this book is devoted to a historical survey of Venice, and this is the best written and most instructive part of the work. In approaching the art, the author seems to bring a disqualifying disapproval of the sensuousness and sumptuousness of Venetian ideals. This covert lack of sympathy comes to light too often in perfunctory and careless writing, so that, while the chapters on the arts are conducted with general good judgment, they add little enough to what we already have on the subject. An eminently colorful art should not be treated with so little literary color. In short, this book by no means measures up to the standard of the same author's "The Art of Florence"—a theme which enlisted a complete sympathy and naturally a fuller understanding.

Fiction

THE SHORN LAMB. By WILLIAM J. LOCKE. Dodd, Mead. 1930. $2.50.

By the recent death of William J. Locke the English-speaking world lost a professional writer of uncommon skill. For that was what Locke was above all things—a professional writer. He had admirable natural qualities for his task, a whimsical fancy, a fertile imagination, broad human sympathies; but the outstanding quality that made him successful was his expert knowledge of the mechanics of his trade of story-teller. Locke himself would have been the last to resent this characterization. Years ago the story was told of a visitor, looking over a sizable shelf of early failures in Locke's study, who expressed amaze that the author should have persevered in face of so much discouragement. "That," was Locke's reply, "is the difference between an amateur and a professional. I'm a professional."

Being what he was Locke showed the defects of his qualities. At his best, as in "The Beloved Vagabond," he could turn out a book that may conceivably still be read with enjoyment when the cycle of time shall have brought round again an era less coy of sentiment and more prone to the romantic than our own; at his worst, he could usually be relied upon to turn out a readable story, even though the mechanics of his workmanship might be all too patently mechanical.

"The Shorn Lamb," which is presumably the last of the long list of volumes from Locke's prolific pen, belongs unfortunately more in the latter category than in the former. The plot is stereotyped, based on the extraordinary likeness of twin brothers, and the assumption by one of the name and property of the other at the latter's death. Naturally, the responsibilities assumed by the surviving twin proved more than he had bargained for when his brother dropped dead in his presence and he made his hasty decision to change clothes with the dead man. They included, among others, a love affair with a married woman and an unsuspected and most discreditable episode in the past. From these premises the story meanders on, acceptably enough because the author knows how to get the best out of his machinery, to a conclusion which even the tried ingenuity of Locke could only make moderately satisfactory.

REARGUARD. By COMPTON PAKENHAM. Knopf. 1930. $2.

As long as interest is centered upon Geoffrey Courtney Langdale, Shanghai pioneer and taipan, "Rearguard" marches along with crisp, military stride. A young man of much promise, he had been an officer in a Guards regiment. An indiscretion forced him to go to the Far East as a remittance man. His cousin, the Earl of Epsom, paid that allowance through forty years, for Geoffrey was heir presumptive to the title.

While waiting upon a tardy destiny was his profession, material prosperity became automatic with Geoffrey. He married the daughter of a wealthy upstart, became a leader in Shanghai social and municipal activities, and begat five children.

Colonial life in the East, with its easy routine, and the fireworks existence of the Langdale family at home, is drawn in clear, sure, believable fashion. Erect, handsome, the best-dressed man in China, the elder Geoffrey is shown at the long club bar over which is transacted most of the business of Shanghai; in his office, where the work is done by his Chinese assistant; and in his pretentious home with his unruly brood and alcoholic wife. The superciliousness, the stupidity, the code of good form, and the family pride that actuate him are set down for some two hundred purposeful pages. It must be admitted, however, that the last quarter of the book, away from the Shanghai *locale*, its action tangled in the war, dwindles away to tedium.

Nevertheless, on putting down the story, the reader has the feeling that these Langdales, impossible as they are, must have lived in some Chinese treaty port. Individually and collectively they are as unrestrained, headstrong, and ill-mannered a group as may be found in current fiction. Yet they linger in the mind with an authentic charm and reality. A hint is given that another book may carry on with the younger Geoffrey. It will be worth waiting for. Compton Pakenham deserves watching.

GLASS MOUNTAIN. By JOSEPH WARREN BEACH. Macrae-Smith. 1930. $2.50.

There is so much talk about emotion in this novel that it is no surprise to find it extremely sentimental. Professor Beach has created neither live characters nor real situations; everything in his book is vague, soft, mushy, and there is little to remember. The prose is stale, the dialogue unreal. There are a few excellent descriptions of the Italian countryside, a well-written scene in a Paris *pension*, and two or three incidental sketches that are not unskilful.

ACRES OF SKY. By CHARLES MORROW WILSON. Putnam. 1930. $2.

The qualities which distinguish this melancholy tale of Ozark mountaineers from the bulk of hillbilly novels are the profound lyricism of its nature descriptions and the facility with which the author has reproduced backwoods dialect without exasperating the reader with atrocious spelling. Considered solely as a novel, the book is not imposing, since it is but another drab variation on the theme of the primitive young idealist who strives to educate himself for the task of ameliorating the lot of his poverty-stricken, benighted people. The years of the protagonist's struggle toward that end—hard, fruitless years—are passed in the Arkansan valley of his birth, toiling on the mortgage-encumbered farm of his inheritance, which he loses to his debtors but finally regains. At the close, as is the custom in such tales of disillusionment and frustration, we leave him no nearer the goal of aspiration than he had been at the beginning. He and his fellows one perceives as vague, hapless atoms moving dimly against the gigantic background, which, in passages of virile, pulsating prose, assumes the role of ruthless omnipotence in their groping, fettered lives. It is this harsh reality of elemental man enslaved by the forces from which he draws his meager sustenance that the book significantly and convincingly conjures.

(*Continued on next page*)

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

BOUND TO HAPPEN. By ELSWYTH THANE. Putnam. 1930. $2.

A bright, witty, urbanely written comedy of love and manners, with English gentle folk involved in a quadrangular affair of the heart, this is one of the most entertaining light novels of the current fiction crop. Charles Gordon, brilliant M.P., protégé of the Prime Minister, and for many years faithful husband of the beautiful, spoiled Cicely, tardily discovers that he is enamored of Nancy, a girl half his age, who since childhood has secretly worshipped him. On the same day that these two confess their affection for each other, Cicely returns home, bringing a young man—her latest of numerous conquests — with whom she is so deeply infatuated as to contemplate the desertion of her husband. The developments which rapidly proceed from this basic situation entangle the four principals in such a maze of difficulties that the benign old Prime Minister himself is called upon to intervene in order to save the innocent Charles from arrest on a charge of murder. The author (in private life Mrs. William Beebe) has skilfully and gracefully avoided the manifold temptations to lapse into farcical banalaties which her story harbored.

SPAWN: A NOVEL OF DEGENERATION. By NAT J. FERBER. Farrar & Rinehart. 1930. $2.50.

As sturdy a piece of naturalism as we have had in a long time, Nat Ferber's novel follows the slice-of-life theory in fine fashion and down to the last detail. The author has written "A Novel of Degeneration," which means a novel of the circumstances leading up to and following inbreeding in an isolated community in the Catskills. There is very little story, in the sense of one character's experience which we follow. The narrative is concerned mostly with the community, and is thus somewhat in the nature of a chronicle.

A dozen families, driven out of Delaware County following a rent war in the 1840's, take refuge in a distant Hollow. During the Civil War, the three men left in the Hollow father a brood of bastard children, and later a gang of quarrymen, living in the Hollow as boarders, beget many more. In the course of time these children intermarry, ignorant or careless of their complicated blood relations. The deformities and disabilities resulting in the next generations are no worse than sociologists tell us sometimes exist.

The circumstantial nature of the tale is everywhere in evidence. The women of the Hollow go to be "bedded" by Ben Kittredge, or another, each in turn, as if they were following some obscure scientific law. Inbreeding is regarded by the author as inevitable, unescapable under the conditions. In other words, everything is strictly naturalistic, if unnatural.

There are certain dramatic scenes of interest for the light they throw on folkways and local manners. There are also certain characters, such as Madge and Deborah Chilvers, and Fritz Reimer, whose reality seems a little more than external and purely ephemeral. Reimer is a typical Catskill patriarch, and the speech and manners of all the characters is true to the region. The author has an appreciation of local color and the picturesque, and his style, though plain, is often quite beautiful.

THE AMERICAN MARQUIS. By GEORGE WESTON. Dodd, Mead. 1930. $2.

In this mildly amusing tale, a stately, unsuccessful, debt-ridden lawyer of fifty, Judge Marlebone, living obscurely in a Delaware town, is suddenly informed that he has fallen heir to the Marquisate of his paternal British ancestors, an immense landed estate in Sussex, England. With his aged, but spry and hardy, mother, his spinster sister, and two comely, marriageable daughters he at once departs for abroad to take up his residence as lord of the manor. But a medley of unlooked-for misadventures there soon befall him and his prospects which not illogically cause his renunciation of the title and estate, with the consequent return to their homeland of all save one of these migrants. The story reads easily, maintains throughout a note of coy gaiety, and should be enjoyed by those who prefer fiction of the lightest kind obtainable.

Travel

AMAZON AND ANDES. By K. G. GRUBB. Dial. 1930. $5.

JUNGLE GOLD. Dad Pedrick's Story, told by WILL DEGROUCHY and WILLIAM L. MAGEE. Bobbs-Merrill. 1930. $3.50.

Mr. Grubb's book is the result of many thousands of miles of travel and investigation in the Upper Amazon waters and through Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Columbia, and Venezuela. In the latter countries he lived as a missionary and his journeys in the Upper Amazon region were made under the auspices of the World Dominion Movement. His work is grave but sympathetic, intelligent, and informative. It is profusely illustrated with photographs, some of them beautiful and all interesting. Many of them, at least, he would appear to have taken himself. One of them, of the Inca citadel of Macchu Picchu in Peru, standing lonely in the midst of breath-taking chasms and Cordillera heights, is in itself an unwritten elegy on the tragic destruction of the civilization that existed in the new world before the Spaniards came.

"Jungle Gold" is quite another sort of story. "Dad Pedric," it seems, is a Philadelphia business man, owner of the Pedrick Tool and Machine Works. The old-hunting enterprise, the adventures of which are narrated here, was an unsuccessful project in the jungles of Dutch Guiana, undertaken in 1897. Pedrick was the manager of the company which was financed by Hermann A. Faulknes of Philadelphia. A million or two was spent, several white men and many negroes died, and in the end nothing came of it. Just what happened, why gold wasn't found when it seems actually to have been there, the authors do not make very clear, but in any case the jungle won.

The art editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*, William deGrouchey, and a Philadelphia dentist, William L. Magee, long familiar with Mr. Pedrick's tales, were moved to turn them into an "adventure story," told in the first person, as if "Dad Pedrick" himself were telling it. It is done in the best popular-magazine style, full of snakes, fever, and sudden death, the jungle personified as a sprawling monster always waiting for its victims. Some of the yarns—that one, for instance, about the army of snakes milling out through a tropical creek "like a herd of stampeding cattle on the prairie"—seem a bit tall, but the narrative was written to give the home folks a thrill, so no matter. The expedition up the Marowyne was a real expedition, at any rate, and there are photographs to prove it, one of them of a locomotive overgrown by the jungle to which it was abandoned thirty years ago.

MAROONED IN CRATER LAKE. By *Alfred Powers*. Portland, Ore.: Metropolitan Press.

HAUNTING EDINBURGH. By *Flora Grierson*. Dodd, Mead. $5.

EXMOOR. By *Arthur O. Fisher*. Smith. $3.

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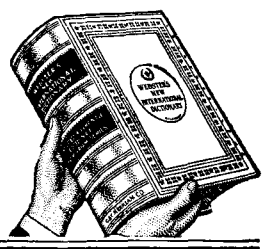

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER c/o *The Saturday Review.*

M. C. F., Augusta, Maine, says that the Maine State Library has been aked for "a list of books telling of the life and work of successful leaders in rural communities" and finds that our literature is singularly poor in either collective or individual biographies of persons who have been leaders of rural life in America. She gives the list that the library made, which, though stretching a point to include lives of those who have benefited rural life, is by no means long. Beard's "The Story of John Frederic Oberlin," Connelley's "The Life of Preston B. Plumb," DeKruif's "Hunger Fighters," Washington's "Up from Slavery," Burbank's "Harvest of the Years," Williams's "Luther Burbank, His Life and Work," Atkinson's "Johnny Appleseed: the Romance of the Sower," Thwaite's "Cyrus Hall McCormick and the Reaper." To this I can add only Bolton Hall's "Three Acres and Liberty" (Macmillan), and Freeman Tilden's "Second Wind" (Viking), which still further stretch the requirements of the list. This is clearly a case for the coöperation of readers. Do all the rural leaders die unsung?

AS we are making additions to recent lists, put on the one for a man beginning to collect fine books "Modern British Authors: Their First Editions," compiled by B. D. Cutler and Willa Stiles, and published by Greenberg. This costs ten dollars a volume, and if you want a signed copy it will be twenty-five, but mistakes and possible losses in this department of book-collecting are expensive. Forty authors are included, and among the features listed is the first bibliographic listing of the works of A. A. Milne, and important additions in checklists of Kipling and Doyle.

MY apologies are due to Simon & Schuster, for saying that we have no Conrad Ferdinand Meyer in English, when they published his "Der Heilige" this very summer, in a translation by Edward Franklin Hauch, "The Saint." This is the first of a series of German novels in translation which Simon & Schuster are to publish for the Germanistic Society of America; they may be pleased to know that this was pointed out to me at once by several readers, among them *G. M. V., Cambridge, Mass.,* and *I. J. B., Rochester, N. Y.,* who adds, "I make the more haste to bring this to your notice and that of the Guide since it was through Dr. Hauch's teaching that I first became interested in German. Four years' instruction under him at Hamilton College only whetted my appetite for more, and I am now a German teacher and graduate student. . . . In 'An Anthology of World Poetry,' a Literary Guild publication of 1928, edited by Mark Van Doren, there is a considerable collection of German translations, including selections from such moderns as Detlev von Liliencron, Richard Dehmel, Otto Julius Bierbaum, Stefan Georg, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Arno Holz, and Rainer Maria Rilke."

P. V. N., Portland, Maine, is collecting books on clowns and clowning, beginning with Doran's "History of Court Fools" and Charles Dickens's "Life of Grimaldi."

"CLOWNS and Pantomimes," by Maurice Disher (Houghton Mifflin), is in a limited edition that must now be picked up in stray copies at an advance over the published price, ten dollars; it is a history of clowning as well as of pantomime, from the beginning, with many fine illustrations—and prints illustrating this art are often very fine indeed. "The Seven Lively Arts," by Gilbert Seldes (Harper), takes the subject in its present-day aspects; a sound and diverting book. As this has much to say about the moving picture's possibilities in this line, I seize the chance to shout for those of Walt Disney, creator of "Mickey the Mouse," whose "Silly Symphonies" seem to me not only admirable fooling but a brand new art-form of extraordinary importance. "Slapstick and Dumbbell," by Harzberg and Moss, is published by Loren, 220 W. 42nd Street, N. Y.; Eddie Foy's autobiography, "Clowning through Life" (Dutton), by Eddie Foy and Alvin Harlow, belongs in this collection, and so do several books on the circus and its life in general; George Conklin's "Ways of the Circus" (Harper), Courtney Riley Cooper's "Under the Big Top" (Little, Brown) and his even more enticing "Lions 'n' Tigers 'n' Everything" (Little, Brown); the history of the John Robinson circus in Gil Robinson's "Old Wagon Show Days" (Brockwell), and E. P. Woodward's "The Other Side of the Circus" (Doubleday, Doran). The reminiscences of De Wolf Hopper, written in collaboration with W. W. Stout (Little, Brown) are called "Once a Clown, always a Clown." The second edition of Mary C. Crawford's "Romance of the American Stage" (Little, Brown) added a good deal about clowns in old days in America. Stunts for clowns are included in "How to Put On an Amateur Circus," by Hacker and Eames (Denison). As for their treatment in fiction and drama, a collector begins at top speed with "Pagliacci," lingers over the circus troup in Dickens's "Hard Times," brings back the once-familiar "piece-to-speak" called "The Clown's Baby"—and then takes to juveniles, such as "Two Funny Clowns" (Coward-McCann), a charming picture-book by Berta and Elmer Haden, and Dixie Willson's "Clown Town" (Doubleday, Doran).

I see that there is a new, elaborately illustrated edition of "Toby Tyler; or, Ten Weeks with a Circus," by James Otis (Harper), a romance of the big top whose story I believe I could have told through without consulting the text, so well I have known it from the days of *Harper's Young People* of blessed memory. This edition has a foreword by the author, whose name I now learn is James Otis Kaler, and another by Kirk Munro telling the dramatic and pathetic circumstances under which the manuscript reached them. "Toby Tyler" has never stopped selling, and I'm glad he has a new dress.

L. B., Northampton, Mass., says that no doubt every child should—and does—know all about copyright, but she has been unlucky in choosing children to ask, What book tells about its workings?

THE most recent is "The Law Relating to Authors and Publishers," by Cloutman and Luck, an English work published here by Bowker (1927). The one most likely to be found in public libraries is R. C. De Wolf's "Outline of Copyright Law" (Luce), based on a series of lectures to law students; it is for lawyers, authors, publishers, and producers. A standard and comprehensive work is the large "Copyright, Its History and Law," by R. R. Bowker (Houghton Mifflin); another is "The Law of Copyright," by G. S. Robertson (Oxford University Press), one of its publications on English Law. Frohlich and Schwartz's "The Law of Motion Pictures," another large and expensive work, is published by Baker; it includes the law of the theatre in general, and copyright as affected by both.

C. J. S. is making a study of the educational systems of England, France, and Germany, and asks for suggestions as to books.

THREE books published by Day are of the greatest interest to one making such a study: "New Education in the German Republic," by Thomas Alexander and Beryl Parker, is a detailed survey of educational theory and practice at the present day; it describes the national school system before and after the change in government and has much information on the manifestation of the Youth Movement. "The New Education in Austria," by Paul Dottrens, describes changes even more thorough-going, quite as remarkable in their way, as the marvellous effort to settle the housing problem that resulted in the new workingmen's flats in Vienna. "The New Education in the Soviet Republic," by Albert Pinkevitch, deals with principles, organization, and methods of common school education and with vocational and adult education nowadays. A little book issued by the Vanguard Press, "New Schools of New Russia," by L. L. Wilson, rapidly surveys this subject. "The Reorganization of Education in Prussia," by Kandel and Alexander, is a publication of Teachers College. Important new developments are explained in Adolphe Ferrière's "The Activity School," translated from the French by Moore and Wooton (Day). "Rural Schools of Norway," by A. S. Jensen (Stratford), and an especially interesting book on "The Danish Folk School," by O. A. Campbell (Macmillan), with a small book by F. Kellerman, "The Effect of the World War on European Education" (Harvard University Press), should be on this list.

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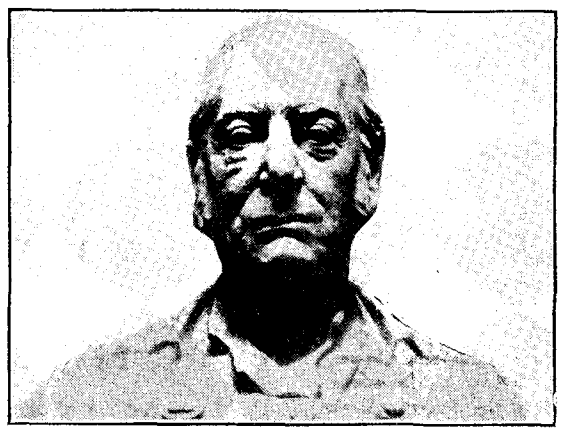

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A Correction

I REGRET that in my review of "The Masque of Queenes" in the issue of October 18, I made the mistake of assuming that the "King's Printers Editions" were issued primarily by Eyre & Spottiswode. The Viking Press states that the Editions are in every way a joint undertaking for which they assume full responsibility and distribution in this country.

In this connection it is regrettable that Inigo Jones's name was misspelled in the caption to the picture published in the same number of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. The error was not made by the Editors. R.

Paper Making in Berkshire

WESTERN Massachusetts has long been famous as the home of fine paper making in America. Fine water and a paper-making tradition dating from the eighteenth century have combined to establish the preëminence of that section of the country. Up until a quarter-century ago some paper was still made by hand, but for many years there has been no commercial manufacture by that method, although paper such as that used for the Government paper money can hardly be equalled for quality of contents and care in making anywhere. The last mill to make handmade paper happens to have been torn down only a year or two ago, and now, within fifty miles of that mill another handmade paper enterprise has been established: while two museums devoted to paper making have been established within a year. One of these, "The Crane Museum" has just sent out an announcement of its opening, during the week of October 27. The Crane Company and Z. & W. M. Crane jointly, have taken a part of "The Old Stone Mill," built in 1844, to house the museum. Included in the exhibits is a miniature mould, and the announcement of the opening is printed on paper made in this mould. The setting of the old building, on the banks of the Housatonic River, is picturesque, and the Messrs. Crane are to be congratulated on the wisdom they have shown in assembling the souvenirs of their past history where everyone may see them, under appropriate conditions. R.

Milwaukee Printers

MESSRS. Douglas C. McMurtrie and Albert H. Allen have issued another pamphlet on early American printers, this one being on Early Printers in Milwaukee. It forms one of the group of detached monographs on printing in America which they have written. The present booklet is none too well printed, which is a pity. R.

Books Received

THE ALOE. By KATHERINE MANSFIELD. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1930.

THIS book contains material which to a large extent was used in "The Prelude," but also material not included therein. The volume also contains "Last Moments Before," "A Journey with the Storeman," and "The Day After." The book is carefully printed, but without distinction. 975 copies have been printed.

ASPEN LEAVES. By ELVIRA FOOTE. San Francisco: Helen Gentry. 1930.

Thirty-three short poems printed delicately in Lutetia type.

CONFESSIONS, A Study in Pathology. By ARTHUR SYMONS. New York: Fountain Press. 1930.

A good, sound piece of printing, devoid of any typographic *flair*. A Fountain Press signed edition. 542 copies at $10.

INTIMATE JOURNALS. By CHARLES BAUDELAIRE. New York: Random House. 1930. 700 copies at $6.50.

This is the first English edition of the Intimate Journals of Baudelaire. It contains an introduction by T. S. Eliot, and eight reproductions in gelatine of drawings by the author. Again an unimaginative piece of printing—but a book of obvious value quite aside from its typography.

THE KING OF THE GOLDEN RIVER. By JOHN RUSKIN. New York: William Edwin Rudge. 1930.

A pleasing reprint of Ruskin's classic, with an introduction by Eugene A. Noble and illustrations by Ferdinand Horvath.

THE PARADISE OF POETS. By ANDREW LANG. Pittsburgh. 1929.

A very well printed, thin book, done at the Carnegie Institute of Technology by Charles W. Pitkin and Harry H. Wisner.

STREET HAUNTING. By VIRGINIA WOOLF. San Francisco: Westgate Press. 1930.

A small but very well printed book—well printed as one expects from the Grabhorn Press. A Westgate signed edition of 500 copies at $7.50. R.

An A B C Book Worth While

AMERICAN ALPHABETS. Edited by PAUL HOLLISTER. New York: Harper & Bros. 1930. $7.50.

IT is perhaps a rash statement (though I *think* it can be substantiated with proof) that there has been but one good alphabet designed by an American designer which is really new and distinctive. I have, so my critics say, made some equally rash statements in this column before, but I don't think they have been unwarranted. Unfortunately, this one distinctive alphabet (at the risk of having the whole pack at me I shall name it—Mr. Goudy's Hadriano) is not shown in Mr. Hollister's otherwise wholly admirable book. And how admirable may be exemplified by the compiler's restrained and wholly defensible remark that "strong and good letters are being made in America."

Mr. Hollister, who as an advertising man (he is Vice-President of that Dickensian firm, Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn) *should know something about letters*, has selected eleven American designers of letters, and has shown numerous examples of their work. He has written a sprightly introduction, and equally sprightly biographical notes on the designers. The men whose work are represented are Bernhard, F. G. Cooper, O. Cooper, Dunn, Dwiggins, Foster, Goudy, Jensen, G. and L Rosa, Sinel and Teague.

It would surprise a European, I think, to see how sane and even conventional most of the alphabets are. And the best of them—for it isn't possible successfully to manhandle the forms of our roman letters. There are many forms shown—roman, italic, black letter, sans-serif, semi-script, etc., almost all of them sufficiently orthodox and orderly to be translatable into type. As a whole they quite bear out Mr. Hollister's suspicion as to the production of good, sound lettering in America.

The binding of the volume is attractively done in red paper sides, with black cloth back bearing a decorative design by W. A. Dwiggins. The only flaw in a useful and *informative book is the extreme thickness* of the paper. Half as thick would have been twice as acceptable. R.

THE LIFE STORY OF BIRDS. By ERIC FITCH DAGLISH. New York: Morrow. 1930. $3.

Any pictures of birds intended for illustrations in an ornithological treatise inevitably suggest comparison with the great work of Thomas Bewick. Bewick's wood blocks have for many years marked the highest development of the art of engraving, and have served as models of what a black-and-white representation should be. It is obvious that other work in the same *genre* would be measured by that standard.

But luckily Bewick's is not the only style, and Mr. Daglish has followed the safer course of doing his engraving in white line on black background—leaving much more of the wood than did Bewick. The blocks shown in his "Life Story of Birds" will, therefore, stand comparison with Bewick's because Mr. Daglish is an engraver of great technical ability.

It is, I think, unquestionable that the

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wood block, in competent hands, is the finest possible medium for reproduction. Where photographic accuracy and the delineation of subtle half-tones are requisite, lithography is superior, but for accurate detail and the preservation of the essential characteristics of an object the definiteness of an engraved line cannot be excelled by any other process. One might submit these wood blocks as evidence, confident that Mr. Dalgish's work will stand high as wood-engravings and as satisfactory pictures of birds. R.

AUCTION SALES CALENDAR

SOTHEBY & CO., London. November 10-14 inclusive: Selections from various private libraries and collections. The 1043 items in this sale include: Lancelot Andrewes's "XCVI. Sermons," 1629; John Bridges's "The Supremacie of Christian Princes," 1573; Francis Bunny's "Plaine and familiar Explanation of the tenne Commandements," London, 1618; Calvin's "Sermons upon the Fifth Booke of Moses," London, printed by Henry Middleton for Thomas Woodcocke, 1583; Sir Edward Coke's "Les Reports," parts 1 through 11 inclusive, 1600-1615; William Cowper's "Heaven Opened," 1611, the first extant edition; Sir A. Fitzherbert's "L'office et aucthoritie de Justices de Peace," R. Tottell, 1584; Thomas Gray's "Odes," Strawberry Hill, 1757; John Hayward's "Sanctvarie of a troubled Soule," London, 1604; James I, "An Apologie for the Oath of Allegiance," London, 1609; Juan de Luna's "Short and Compendius Art for to learne to reade," London, 1623; Ferdinando Pulton's "Abstract of all the penal statutes," London, 1579; then, passing in the second day's sale to the nineteenth century, it presents Blackmore's "Clara Vaughan," 1864, and "Lorna Doone," 1869; seven of Wilkie Collins's novels; Disraeli's "Vivian Grey," 1826-27; several of Captain Marryat's novels; Herman Melville; Charles Reade; twenty-eight of Trollope's works; a presentation copy of Matthew Arnold's "Geist's Grave" with an inscription in the author's writing; Blake's "Illustrations of the Book of Job," March, 1826; presentation copies of Carlyle's "Life of Schiller," and "Life of John Sterling"; Keats's "Endymion," London, 1818; a series of Blackmore letters and the autograph manuscript of his novel, "The Maid of Sker," 264 pages; three letters from Miss Nightingale to the Editor of *Good Words*, complaining that an article she had written on Missionary Health Officers in India had been cut without her sanction; a series of about eighty-seven letters written between May, 1832, and March, 1869, by Carlyle to John Stuart Mill; twenty-five letters from Mill to Carlyle; an autograph manuscript of eighteen pages by Charlotte Brontë, "Reminiscences of Early Days"; a series of letters by members of the Austen family with references to Jane; the autograph manuscript of Wilkie Collins's "Poor Miss Finch"; apparently a complete collection of Robert Bridges, including the first draft of "The Testament of Beauty"; the complete works of H. M. Tomlinson presented by him to his sister; Stevenson's "The Hanging Judge: a drama in three acts and six tableaux," Edinburgh, 1887; an almost complete collection of books printed at the Kelmscott Press, including the Chaucer; a series of letters from Dickens to his sister-in-law; about six hundred letters from George Eliot to Mr. and Mrs. Bray; and Vincent of Beauvais's "Speculum Morale," Strassburg, 1476.

American Art Association Anderson Galleries, November 12: The library of Herman and Paul Jaehne, of New York. The Jaehne collection possesses an unusually fine group of reference books on Chinese porcelain—the Catalogue of the Eumorfopolous collection of Oriental pottery and porcelain; the various works by R. L. Hobson; the Catalogue of the Morgan Collection of Chinese Porcelains; and W. T. Walters's "Oriental Ceramic Art." The other books include: David Carey's "Life in Paris," with twenty-one colored aquatint plates designed by George Cruikshank; William Combe's three "Tours of Doctor Syntax," London, 1812-1821; Captain Thomas Williamson's "Oriental Field Sports," London, 1807; Augustin Daly's copy of Dr. John Doran's "Their Majesties' Servants," extra-illustrated by the owner; and I. N. Phelps Stokes's "The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909."

The Christian Science Library of the late Mrs. Annie V. C. Leavitt, of Buffalo, sold the fifteenth of October by Frank J. Wilder at Somerville, Massachusetts, brought rather high prices. A set of the *Christian Science Journal*, from April, 1883, to March, 1885, sold for $1,100; a single copy of volume I, number 1, of the same *Journal* brought $100, while the issue for June 7, 1884 (vol. 2, number 8), brought $360. The first edition of "Science and Health," Boston, 1875, with the rare errata leaf, went for $450; the second edition of which volume 2 only was ever published, for $600. Mrs. Eddy's "Science of Man" (Boston), 1883, brought $150; her "Christian Science: No and Yes," Boston, 1887, $110; the second edition, issued in the same year, $75. A presentation copy of "Pond and Purpose," Concord, 1892, from Mrs. Eddy to Mrs. Leavitt, sold for $140. Five letters from Mrs. Eddy went for $100, $106, $105, $55 (this for a note on the back of one of her engraved "Pleasant View" calling cards), and $110.

G. M. T.

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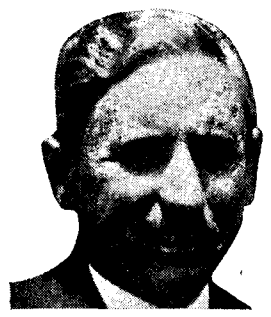

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A touch of this spirit *The Inner Sanctum* detected in the atmosphere when WILL DURANT, laden with trunk-loads of books and manuscripts, weighted down with honors and invitations from sages and potentates, came home from his recent trip around the world.

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THE PHOENIX NEST

LAST spring we printed an announcement of a new monthly magazine of poetry, *The Poet and the Critic*. A correspondent of ours thereupon communicated with the publisher thereof and mailed her cheque for a trial subscription at three dollars. The cheque was cashed, but the magazine was never received, and though the subscriber wrote the publishers four times, and all her letters bore a return address, to only one did she receive a reply. This stated that two copies of the first number had been mailed her and that a third was being forwarded. After allowing time for their delivery she wrote that she had never received them. This letter brought no response, and a month later, on August thirteenth, she wrote asking immediate return of her cheque. She received no reply. Her correspondence was with *Alan Pater*, Editor, and *F. G. Stone*, Circulation Department. Our announcement in this column concerning *The Poet and the Critic* was printed in perfectly good faith, and we now publish the above to explain a glaring error into which we were quite evidently led. . . .

Cape & Smith have now brought out the second *Lynd Ward* woodcut novel, "Madman's Drum," the title being possibly taken from *Oscar Wilde's* "Ballad of Reading Gaol." We don't care as much for this new book as we did for "God's Man," although once more Ward's theme is interesting and some of his pictures dramatically effective. Considered purely as woodcuts, we like some of the compositions very much indeed, others not in the least. The artist cultivates several tricks of style that we think rather overdone. As for his narrative, it lacks somewhat the simple symbolic directness of his first book, but at a second looking-through the thread of the story is not hard to follow. A first glance will not suffice. And yet the tale in pictures is not particularly subtle, it is simply very much condensed in places. . . .

The same firm has just brought out the short stories of *Kay Boyle*, a younger American whose work in *Transition* in Paris has gradually been attracting attention. She belongs to the Paris group which included the late *Harry Crosby*, and can boast *James Joyce* and *Gertrude Stein* as its leaders. Kay Boyle's stories are of their own kind, but not so experimental as to be cryptic. . . .

Kurt Wiese has remarkably illustrated in wood-cut *Wynant Davis Hubbard's* "Bong Kwé: The Story of an African Buffalo" (Doubleday, Doran). All followers of American football remember Hubbard of Harvard. In his maturity he has explored widely in the open and captured as many as three thousand wild animals. He is particularly an authority on the wild life of Africa. In "Bong Kwé" his exciting narrative makes use of his deep knowledge of animal psychology and of their life habits on their native heath. His publishers have made for his authoritative story a sumptuously beautiful book. . . .

A particularly valuable contribution to anthropology is *R. F. Barton's* book on the head-hunters of the Philippines, "The Half-Way Sun" (Brewer & Warren). Barton was a teacher in the Islands for ten years and returned there later to practise dentistry. He became a priest among the people of Northern Luzon, and without "going native" witnessed native ceremonies and learned of the most intimate manners and customs in a way that has provided him with material never before utilized. Moreover, his narrative gift is a genuine one and his story never dull or dry. Both country and people are remarkable, and one gets to know the latter intimately. The photographs that illustrate the book are most unusual. The date of the volume's publication is November seventeenth. . . .

A novel that has attracted a chorus of praise in England from *Hugh Walpole*, *J. B. Priestley*, *Shiela Kaye-Smith*, and *Harold Nicolson*, is "Other Man's Saucer," by *J. Keith Winter*. Walpole, indeed, has called it "the most remarkable first novel of the year." The author has produced it while still an Oxford undergraduate. Doubleday, Doran publish it here. We couldn't lay it down until we finished it. . . .

"Ultimo," an imaginative narration of life under the earth, written by *Ruth Vassos* and illustrated by *John Vassos*, is a new Dutton book of very singular character. It is not scientific fantasy. A shrinking, dying sun causes the earth to become a wilderness of ice, and mankind is driven under the earth's surface for warmth. That is the beginning of this Jules Vernian, H. G. Wellsian imagining, though the manner of the narrative reminds one much more of *Poe*. The text is quite brief, and Mr. Vassos's designs are, as usual, of great grace in their patterns borrowed from geometrical and crystalloid shapes. His style is remarkably his own, though it somewhat easily cloys the eye with its mechanical perfection. . . .

Among the detective stories, get *Earl Derr Biggers's* "Charlie Chan Carries On" (Bobbs-Merrill). . . .

Since we recently described the domiciles of several authors, *The Carthaginian* has again erupted from her Dido Cave to inform us that we should really see her studio-drawing-room.

> Lazily leaning bolt upright in the luxurious horsehair dining-room chairs that furnish her exotic "place d'ouvrage," the casual visitor feels free, nay, more than free to splash cocktails in any direction as he gazes into the steady north light of her tall, bare, undraped, unashamed windows. It is a glittering prospect: the delicate scrolled ironwork of the fire-escape, picturesquely scaled and eroded under the steady downpour of the October rain; the rare, rare slips of the flora begonia, raring and raring their ravishing spectra of green and flame and bronzed earth, and slipping and slipping day by day until naught remains but a wasted twig and a neat little welter of of-the-stones stony, from which the winds have long since blown away the of-the-earth-earthy. . . .

And so on. And our heart leaps up as we learn that *The Carthaginian* also possesses a *carafe de l'encre*, as she calls it, bearing the legend, "Sheaffer's Skrip. Black. (Washable)" So do we! And it has a green cork. What a small world it is after all. . . .

So the spokesman for William Faro, Inc., publisher of the expurgated "Lady Chatterley's Lover," turned out to be *Samuel Roth*, former publisher of that remarkable feat, *The Two Worlds Monthly*, against whom *James Joyce* instituted a suit of five hundred thousand dollars! Well, well, what activity! Mrs. Lawrence had apparently given not the slightest authority for the revisions. Alfred A. Knopf, the American publisher of the works of *D. H. Lawrence*, has made public his widow's telegram to that effect. What singular and remarkable business acumen this Mr. Roth possesses! . . .

The G. Lynn Sumner Company, an advertising agency at 285 Madison Avenue, issues a letter now and then to its friends. In its October one it quotes

> some extracts from the time-honored formulæ of marine insurance. Though your craft be but a mere outboard scooter, here is how the insurance upon it is described in the venerably reverberating phrases inherited from centuries of Lloyd's.
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>
> Who could resist buying a policy that insured his "Ordnance, Munitions and Artillery" against "Pirates and Rovers"?

B. W. Huebsch, vice-president of the Viking Press, concluded negotiations in Sweden for the English language book rights to the diaries found on the bodies of *Andrée* and *Strindberg*. The volume will be published simultaneously all over the world. The Royal Geographic Society of Sweden has appointed an editorial committee headed by *Professor Gunnar Anderson*, famous geographer, explorer, and personal friend of the late Andrée, and this committee is at work upon the diaries probing a mystery over thirty years old, and making the exciting story of the early balloon attempts into a narrative. This will be the only complete and authoritative account of Andrée's spectacular expedition. It will be published December first. . . .

Coward-McCann tells us that the new *Knut Hamsun* work is just full of laughter, as contrasted to the "starkness" of his earlier sagas. He is no longer stern or rock-bound.

Huzza!

THE PHŒNICIAN.

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Points of View

Mr. Bell Replies

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

As a rule I do not reply to criticisms of what I have said or written made by persons who are unwilling to sign their names to communications. Anonymous letters are merely anonymous letters. I cannot refrain, however, from a word or two about the letter from "Teacher and Graduate Student" in your correspondence column of October 11th. I feel moved mildly to remark that this person seems a fairly good illustration of at least one point which I attempted to make—namely, that people do occasionally get into graduate schools who cannot accurately read simple English prose.

I cannot see how anyone could have gained from my article entitled, "Informing the Unformed" the impression that I advocate giving a training suitable and indeed necessary as preparation for university work later on, to all the boys and girls who are in schools. My point—and I will not have it obscured—was and is that the universities cannot possibly develop a matured scholarship unless the schools will train to function the minds of such of their pupils *as are intended for collegiate careers.* I am not asking—no sane person would—that schools make silk purses out of sow's ears. What I suggest, ever so gently, is that they stop making rancid bacon out of good pig.

Your correspondent says that she—I cannot help thinking that it is a woman who is writing—finds herself tired of trying to teach large classes English grammar; that their minds cannot grasp it. Well, for such demi-morons I, too, should advise "orientation courses." But that does not dispose of the pupils who do have brains. At least I cannot see that it does. It is those more competent boys and girls that I care most about.

BERNARD IDDINGS BELL.

St. Stephen's College,
Columbia University.

The Word "American"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

One of your reviewers speaks by the way of "our customary misuse of the word 'American,' as of a thing too thoroughly agreed on to call for discussion." And in fact it is in much danger of being thoroughly agreed on. It is time that somebody stood up for history and common sense.

When in 1776 certain persons declared "that these colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states," they thus became the only states in America according to the use of the word "state" in all white nations at that time (and, for that matter, to this day). They were still so when they adopted their Articles of Confederation and took to themselves a national name. They did not foresee how very soon there would be other states in America, any more than anybody else foresaw the date and scope of the French Revolution. So they took a name to which nobody on earth could object, "The United States of America."

I said nobody could object to it; but two objections soon became apparent, its cumbersome length and the difficulty of forming derivatives from it. Thereupon they presently began to shorten it for some purposes to "United States" and for other purposes to "America," and they used the adjective "American" which the circumstances of the Revolutionary War had already made familiar to them. All this was perfectly normal. There was nothing conceited or aggressive about it. And when such names are once established, it is right and proper that they continue.

The case is not without parallel. A few years later another new republic took the name of "The Republic of the Equator," it being at that time the only republic on the equator. South Americans are not likely to make our blunder of feeling as if "Ecuador" were something else than "equator." It speedily became usual to abbreviate this for most purposes to the Spanish for "Equator" and to speak of "Ecuadarians." Today there is a much bigger republic on the equator; but the Brazilians are not supposed to get angry because their neighbors on the west continue to call themselves *ecuatorianos.*

In like manner another new republic, further south, called itself the *Republica Argentina*, which is an ornamental way of saying "Republic of the Rio de la Plata." It expected to include both banks of that river; but, for reasons known to experts in South American history, one bank became independent and took its name from another river. In this case it was the smaller republic that was frozen out of the name; in the case of Ecuador and Brazil it was the larger; but the Uruguayans too are not supposed to get angry because their next-door neighbors call themselves *argentinos.*

This country trod on nobody's toes when it took the name of United States of America. After it had become known by that name it would have been unreasonable for anybody to demand that the name be changed (the Holy Roman Empire did not change its name because of Voltaire's epigram), and in fact nobody has made that demand on us. But if we have that name, it is equally unreasonable for anybody to object to our forming an adjective from it in the only obvious way. If we had so far declared our independence of linguistic precedent as to call ourselves Unistatians, would it be the business of the United States of Brazil to take offense?

The Chilean press reports the rate of exchange of United States money as "oro americano." It does well.

STEVEN T. BYINGTON.

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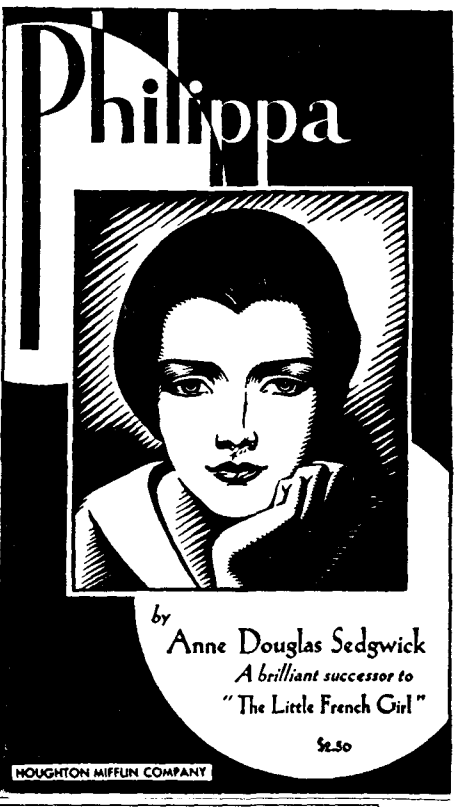

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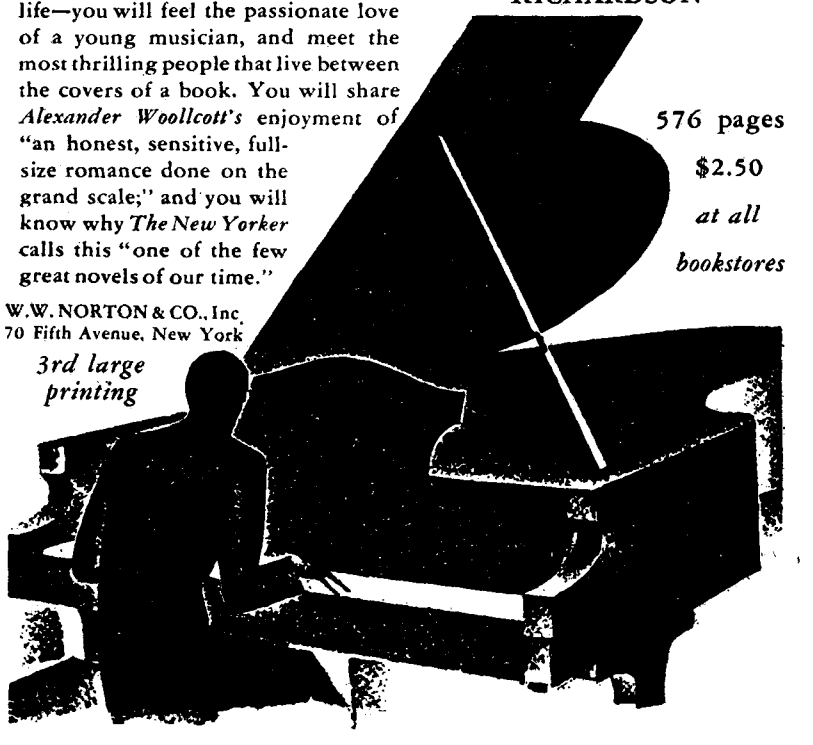

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